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KITĀB AL-’ĪMĀN

CLARIFYING THE TRUTH BETWEEN AHL AS-SUNNAH
AND AHL AL-BID’AH AND THOSE WHO LEFT
THE PATH OF THE SALAF

COMPILED BY
Ibn Ahmad

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

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Introduction

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ عَلَى إِحْسَانِهِ، وَالشُّكْرُ لَهُ عَلَى تَوْفِيقِهِ وَامْتِنَانِهِ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلٰهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ، صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ، وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيمًا كَثِيرًا.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ،

All praise is due to Allah for His kindness, and thanks be to Him for His guidance and blessings. I bear witness that there is no God but Allah alone, with no partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger. May Allah's peace and blessings be upon him, his family, and his companions in great abundance. To proceed:

We have come to a point in time where many people have neglected the statements of the Salaf, either intentionally or unintentionally on the matter of īmān and deviated from the path of the Salaf. Many people have neglected this topic, either thinking it is not important or intentionally misleading people, to the point many people ascribe statements to the Salaf, that which are incorrect, or justifying maters, such as the issue between the Salaf and the Murji'at al-Fuqahā' as being no more than a mere verbal disagreement and thus they deviated from what they held, This book will include statement applied to individual as well as errors some may have made, so one is aware the seriousness of this matter and that it is far from a mere verbal disagreement.

In'sha'allah we aim to clarify the true belief of the Salaf regarding this matter, bringing statements from the Imāms and Scholars of Ahl As-Sunnah to make sure this matter is clear and there is no room left for doubt.

Īmān in the language and its relation to the shariah

Imān has been defined in many ways - can mean tasdiq (belief), trust, tranquility and acknowledgement. The most widespread definition is tasdiq.

Al-Azhari said: "**The scholars of language and others unanimously agreed that the meaning of īmān (īmān) is taṣdīq (belief).**" He cited the verse in which Allah relates the words of the brothers of Yusuf to their father: {And you will not believe us even if we are truthful} [Yusuf: 17] — The scholars of tafsir are in agreement that "you will not believe us" here means "you will not consider us truthful."[1]

Among those who affirmed this was Ibn Baṭṭah, may Allah have mercy on him, where he said: "Īmān is a term whose meaning is taṣdīq (belief)." He then cited the same verse: {And you will not believe us}, explaining it to mean: "You will not consider us truthful."[2]

Some modern-day Murji'ah have objected to Ibn Baṭṭah's definition of īmān as belief, claiming that in doing so he agrees with the Murji'ah and most Ashʿarīs . This is incorrect and a lack of understanding, Ibn Baṭṭah was speaking of linguistic definition, when he went to the shari' definition he mentioned the three components (action, speech, belief) and ones īmān is invalid without all 3.

Also important to note when some scholars from Ahl As-Sunnah defined it as tasdiq they did not mean what the Murji'ah and Ashāʿirah meant. Rather they mean affirmative belief accompanied by submission – acknowledgement that necessitates inward and outward compliance without doubt.

Muḥammad ibn Naṣr al-Marwazī said, discussing the difference between īmān and Islam according to Ahl al-Sunnah: "They said: īmān (īmān) in language means belief (taṣdīq), and Islam in language means submission. So the essence of īmān is belief in Allah and what has come from Him, and this is what the Prophet ﷺ meant when he said: 'īmān is that you believe in Allah.' From that belief comes submission to Allah, because if one truly believes in Allah, he will submit to Him. If he submits, he will obey. So submission arises from belief, and it is the root of Islam. The meaning of taṣdīq (belief) is knowledge of Allah and acknowledgment of His Lordship, His promises and threats, and the obligations due to Him.

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[1] Tahdhīb al-Lugha (15/368)

[2] al-Ibānah al-Ṣughrā (p. 249)

The term taḥqīq in language means establishing belief in its origin. From belief in Allah comes submission to Him, and from submission comes obedience and righteous actions.
The first act of obedience that results from the heart's submission to Allah—which is caused by belief—is verbal declaration (iqrār) with the tongue. Because once a person believes that Allah is his Lord, he submits sincerely in servitude. Then submission begins with the tongue, so he affirms his servitude sincerely, just as Allah said to Ibrahim: {Submit! He said: "I have submitted to the Lord of the worlds} [al-Baqarah: 131], meaning: I have sincerely submitted in obedience to You."[3]

Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī said, after mentioning the disagreement over the meaning of īmān (īmān): "**The correct opinion in our view is that īmān is a term for belief (taṣdīq), as the Arabs used it**, and as it is found in the Book of Allah—may He be glorified—when reporting the words of the brothers of Yusuf to their father Yaʿqūb: {And you will not believe us even if we are truthful} [Yusuf: 17], meaning: you will not consider us truthful in what we are saying. **However, the meaning by which one deserves the unrestricted title of 'believer' is the one that encompasses the meanings of īmān—that is, fulfilling all the obligations of Allah Most High, including knowledge, verbal affirmation, and action.**"[4]

al-Zajjāj defined īmān as: "īmān is the expression of submission and acceptance of the Sharia and of what the Prophet brought, along with conviction and belief in the heart."[5]

al-Fayrūzābādī wrote: "Īmān is trust, showing submission, and acceptance of the Sharia."[6]

Shaykh Ḥāfiẓ al-Ḥakamī said:: "Those among Ahl al-Sunnah who said that īmān is taṣdīq (belief), based on the apparent linguistic meaning, meant by it the submissive belief that necessarily leads to both outward and inward compliance without any doubt. They did not mean mere belief alone. For Iblīs did not deny Allah's command to prostrate; rather, he refused to comply out of arrogance and disbelief."[7]

For this reason, Ibn Baṭṭah explicitly stated that this belief must comprise three components: "Īmān in Allah means believing in what He has said, commanded, obligated, and forbidden—everything that the messengers brought from Him and was revealed in the

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[3] Taʿẓīm Qadr al-Ṣalāh (2/695)
[4] Taklīfah fī Maʿālim al-Dīn (p. 190)
[5] Lisān al-ʿArab (13/23)
[6] al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ (p. 1176)
[7] Maʿārij al-Qabūl (2/594)

scriptures. This belief consists of: a statement by the tongue, belief in the heart, and action by the limbs."[8]

Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī also said: "No one familiar with the Arabic language can deny that īmān means taṣdīq (belief). If in Arabic īmān is belief, and belief involves the heart, the tongue, and the limbs—and belief of the heart is determination and submission; belief of the tongue is verbal affirmation; belief of the limbs is striving and action—then the meaning by which a person earns praise and the loyalty of the believers is through fulfilling all three components. For there is no disagreement that if someone acts and affirms with his tongue but does not know his Lord, he does not deserve the title of 'believer'; and if someone knows and understands but denies with his tongue and rejects what he knows of Allah's Oneness, he also does not deserve that title. So just as the one who affirms verbally without knowledge is not considered a believer, nor the one who knows without affirming, likewise, the one who knows and affirms but does not act is also not deserving of the title in an absolute sense.
For it is only when all these aspects are found in a person that he truly deserves to be called a believer without restriction."[9]

Ibn Taymiyyah said: "Even though īmān (īmān) includes belief (taṣdīq), it is not merely belief. Rather, it is affirmation (iqrār) and tranquility (ṭuma'nīnah).

This is because belief pertains only to information (khabar), whereas commands (amr) do not involve belief as such. The speech of Allah consists of both information and commands: Information demands belief in the one who gives it, and command demands submission and compliance. That submission is an action of the heart, which encompasses humility and obedience—even if the commanded action is not performed outwardly. So, when information is met with belief, and commands are met with submission, the foundation of īmān has taken root in the heart—namely, ṭuma'nīnah (serenity) and iqrār (affirmation). The word īmān is derived from amn (security), which means stability and serenity. This only occurs when belief and submission are both firmly settled in the heart. If that is the case, then insulting (God) is an act of humiliation and disdain, whereas submission to His command is an act of honor and reverence.

It is impossible for a heart that has truly submitted to also belittle or disdain Him.
So, if the heart shows contempt or disrespect, it is impossible that it also contains submission or surrender. Thus, it cannot contain īmān (īmān). This is precisely the nature of Iblīs's disbelief: he heard Allah's command, did not deny His messenger, but he did not submit to the

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[8] al-Ibānah al-Ṣughrā (p. 240)
[9] Tahdhīb al-Āthār (2/686)

command. He refused to comply, and arrogantly turned away from obedience, and so became a disbeliever. This is a point where many of the later generations went astray: They assumed that īmān is nothing but belief, and then they looked at individuals like Iblīs and Pharaoh—who didn't deny in their hearts, or who may have only denied outwardly with their tongues—and saw that their disbelief was of the severest kind. So, they became confused. Had they been guided to what the righteous predecessors (al-Salaf al-ṣāliḥ) were upon, they would have known that īmān is both speech and action. I mean: originally, it is speech of the heart and action of the heart. According to the message and speech of Allah, īmān includes both His information and His commands. The heart must: Believe His information with a belief that produces a state corresponding to what is believed in (and this belief is a form of knowledge and speech), and submit to His commands and surrender to them, and that submission is a form of will and action. One is not a believer except through both aspects together. So, if a person refuses to submit, he is arrogant, and thus among the disbelievers. And if someone believes, then know that kufr (disbelief) is broader than mere denial. It can be:

- denial and ignorance
- arrogance and injustice.

That is why Iblīs is only described as disbelieving and being arrogant—not as a denier. Likewise, the disbelief of those who know the truth, such as the Jews and the like, is of the same kind as that of Iblīs. As for those who are ignorant, like many Christians, their disbelief is out of misguidance and ignorance. Do you not see that a group from among the Jews came to the Prophet ﷺ, asked him questions, and when he answered, they said: 'We testify that you are a Prophet'—yet they still did not follow him. And the same goes for Heraclius and others. Their knowledge and belief did not benefit them, nor save them!"[10]

One of the reasons for the misguidance of the innovators (ahl al-bidʿah)—such as the Murji'ah and others—is their reliance on the Arabic language in interpreting the terminology of the Shariah, while abandoning the Qur'an, the Sunnah, and the reports from the early generations of this Ummah.

As Ibn Taymiyyah said in Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/118): "The Murji'ah have deviated from the fundamental explanations found in the Qur'an, the Sunnah, and the statements of the Companions and the Followers, and instead relied on their own opinions and their interpretations based on linguistic understanding. This is the method of the innovators. For this reason, Imām Aḥmad used to say: 'Most of the people's errors come from interpretation and analogy.' That is why you will find the Muʿtazilah, the Murji'ah, the Rāfiḍah, and other innovators interpreting the Qur'an based on their reasoning and what they understand from

[10] al-Ṣārim al-Maslūl (3/966)

language. They do not rely on the hadiths of the Prophet, nor the sayings of the Companions, the Followers, or the Imām of the Muslims. They neither rely on the Sunnah, nor the consensus of the Salaf and their reports.

Instead, they base their understanding on intellect and language. You will find them uninterested in the books of transmitted tafsīr, hadith, and the sayings of the Salaf.
Rather, they rely on books of literature and speculative theology authored by their leaders. This is also the method of the heretics: they only take from books of philosophy, literature, and language, while ignoring the books of the Qur'an, Hadith, and the traditions.

These (heretics) turn away from the texts of the Prophets, as they claim these texts do not lead to knowledge. And those others (innovators) interpret the Qur'an according to their personal reasoning and understanding, without relying on reports from the Prophet (peace be upon him) or his Companions. We have already mentioned the statements of Imām Aḥmad and others, rejecting such methods and declaring them the path of innovation. And if you examine their arguments, you will find them to be mere claims with no sound evidence behind them."[11]

He also said: "It is important to know that the words found in the Qur'an and the hadith—if their meanings have been explained and clarified by the Prophet ﷺ — then there is no need to refer to the interpretations of linguists or anyone else.
The innovators only fell into error because they turned away from this path, and began building Islam on premises they assumed were correct—whether regarding the indications of certain words, or based on intellectual concepts—without reflecting on the explanation given by Allah and His Messenger. And every premise that contradicts the explanation of Allah and His Messenger is nothing but misguidance.

That is why Imām Aḥmad spoke in his well-known treatise against those who rely on what they presume from the Qur'an, without referencing the Prophet's explanations, or those of his Companions and the Followers. He also mentioned this in his letter to Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Jurjānī, in his refutation of the Murji'ah. This is the way of all the Imāms of the Muslims: they never depart from the explanation of the Messenger (peace be upon him) when they are able to access it. Whoever departs from their path falls into innovation—whose reality is speaking about Allah and His Messenger without knowledge or saying other than the truth. And this is something that Allah and His Messenger have prohibited."[12]

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[11] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/118)
[12] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/286)

Īmān in shariah consists of 3 pillars and one's īmān is not valid unless all 3 are present

Ahl As-Sunnah by ijmāʿ agree īmān consists of affirmation of heart, speech of tongue, action of limbs, īmān is not valid till all 3 three are present. Their expressions vary: Some say: īmān is speech and action. īmān is speech, action and intention and others say īmān is speech, action, intention and adherence to sunnah.

All of this is valid and it's a refutation of the Murji'ah who exclude action from īmān – who claim one's īmān is valid even if they don't perform any actions while being able.

ibn Taymiyyah said: "Among these statements are the sayings of the Salaf and the Imāms of the Sunnah in defining īmān. At times they say: 'It is speech and action.' Other times they say: 'It is speech, action, and intention.' Sometimes they say: 'It is speech, action, intention, and following the Sunnah.' And sometimes they say: 'It is speech of the tongue, belief of the heart, and action of the limbs.' All of this is correct. The intent is that when the Salaf said: 'īmān is speech and action,' they meant the speech of the heart and tongue, and the action of the heart and limbs.

Those who added 'belief' did so because the word 'speech' might be misunderstood as referring only to outward utterance, or out of caution, so they included 'belief of the heart.' And those who said: 'speech, action, and intention' meant that 'speech' includes belief and verbal declaration, but added 'intention' because it might not be understood from the word 'action.' Those who added 'adherence to the Sunnah' did so because none of these are beloved to Allah except when done in accordance with the Sunnah.

They did not mean just any speech or action, but only what is legislated. Their aim was to refute the Murji'ah, who defined īmān as speech only, so they said: 'Rather, it is speech and action.' Those who divided it into four parts explained what they meant—as when Sahl ibn 'Abdullah al-Tustarī was asked: 'What is īmān?' He replied: 'Speech, action, intention, and Sunnah. Because īmān, if it is speech without action, is disbelief. If it is speech and action without intention, it is hypocrisy. And if it is speech, action, and intention without Sunnah, it is innovation.'"[13]

Ibn al-Qayyim said: "īmān is speech and action. Speech consists of the speech of the heart and the tongue; and action consists of the action of the heart and the limbs. To explain: Whoever

[13] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/170)

knows Allah in his heart but does not declare it with his tongue is not a believer—as Allah said about the people of Pharaoh: 'They denied them, though their souls were convinced of them, out of injustice and pride.' [al-Naml: 14] And as He said about the people of ʿĀd and Thamūd: 'And [We destroyed] ʿĀd and Thamūd, and it has become clear to you from their dwellings. Satan beautified their actions for them and kept them from the path, although they were insightful.' [al-ʿAnkabūt: 38] And Mūsā said to Pharaoh: 'Inaction, you know that none sent these down but the Lord of the heavens and the earth.' [al-Isrā': 102] These people had internal knowledge and certainty—what is called the speech of the heart—but they were not believers.

Likewise, whoever declares īmān with his tongue but not in his heart is not a believer either; rather, he is among the hypocrites.

And similarly, whoever knows in his heart and declares it with his tongue is not a complete believer unless he brings forth the action of the heart—such as love and hate, loyalty and enmity. He must love Allah and His Messenger, show loyalty to the allies of Allah, have enmity toward His enemies, submit fully to Allah alone with his heart, and yield to following His Messenger, obeying him, and adhering to his law both outwardly and inwardly. Even after doing all this, his īmān is not complete until he acts on what he has been commanded to do. These four are the pillars upon which the structure of īmān is built, and they all return to two foundations: knowledge and action."[14]

Some statement from the scholars of Ahl As-Sunnah

Al-Zuhrī (d. 125 AH), may Allah have mercy on him, said: "We used to say: Islam is through declaration, and īmān is through action. īmān and action are twins—neither benefits without the other."[15]

ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAmr al-Awzāʿī (d. 157 AH), may Allah have mercy on him, said: "īmān does not stand without speech, speech does not stand without action, and īmān, speech, and action do not stand without intention that conforms to the Sunnah. Those of our predecessors who passed away did not distinguish between īmān and action. Action is part of īmān, and īmān is part of action. īmān is a comprehensive term, as the names of religions are comprehensive. Its validation is through action. So whoever believes with his tongue, knows with his heart, and confirms it with his actions—this is the firm handhold that will never break.

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[14] ʿUddat al-Ṣābirīn (p. 206)

[15] Narrated by Abū ʿAmr al-Ṭalamankī, as in Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/295)

But whoever speaks with his tongue, without knowing with his heart or confirming with action—it will not be accepted from him, and he will be among the losers in the Hereafter."[16]

Sufyān al-Thawrī (d. 161 AH), may Allah have mercy on him, said: "Ahl al-Sunnah say: No action is valid except with īmān, and no īmān is valid without action."[17]

He also said: "They (i.e., Ahl al-Sunnah) say: īmān is speech and action, out of fear of declaring themselves righteous. No action exists except with īmān, and no īmān exists except with action."[18]

He also said, may Allah have mercy on him: "The jurists used to say: No speech is upright without action; no speech and action are upright without intention; and none of these three are valid except when they conform to the Sunnah."[19]

Wakīʿ ibn al-Jarrāḥ (d. 196 AH), may Allah have mercy on him, said: "The people of īmān say: Speech is not sufficient without action and conviction."[20]

Sufyān ibn ʿUyaynah (d. 198 AH), may Allah have mercy on him, said: "īmān is speech and action. We received this from those who came before us: speech and action, and there can be no speech without action."[21]

Muḥammad ibn Idrīs al-Shāfiʿī (d. 204 AH), may Allah have mercy on him, said: "The consensus (ijmāʿ) of the Companions, the Tābiʿīn, and those whom we met among them, was that īmān is: speech, action, and intention—none of the three suffices without the others."[22]

Abū ʿUbayd al-Qāsim ibn Sallām (d. 224 AH), may Allah have mercy on him, said: "The matter upon which the Sunnah is established with us—and upon which our scholars before us were—is what we have outlined in this book: that īmān is composed of intention, speech, and action altogether."[23]

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[16] (Al-Ibānah al-Kubrā, no. 1183)
[17] Narrated by al-Lālikāʾī (no. 1621)
[18] Al-Sharīʿah (2286)
[19] Al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (1185)
[20] Dhamm al-Kalām wa-Ahlih (no. 472)
[21] Al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh ibn Aḥmad (716)
[22] Narrated by al-Lālikāʾī (no. 1448) and also by Ibn Taymiyyah in al-Īmān (p. 197), both quoting from al-Umm by al-Shāfiʿī. Ibn Kathīr said in Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfiʿiyyah (4/1): **"Al-Ṭabarī (meaning al-Lālikāʾī) transmitted from Imām al-Shāfiʿī that he cited ijmāʿ on this matter, as did others among the Imāms**." And Ibn Rajab, may Allah have mercy on him, said in Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm wa-al-Ḥikam (1/104): "**Al-Shāfiʿī cited the consensus of the Companions, the Tābiʿīn, and those after them whom he met.**"
[23] al-Īmān by Abū ʿUbayd al-Qāsim ibn Sallām (no. 41)

Muḥammad ibn Ismāʿīl al-Bukhārī (d. 256 AH), may Allah have mercy on him, said: "I met more than a thousand men from among the scholars of the various cities... and I did not find any of them differing on the fact that īmān is speech and action, and it increases and decreases."[24]

al-Muzanī (d. 264 AH), the student of al-Shāfiʿī, may Allah have mercy on him, said in Sharḥ al-Sunnah: "īmān is speech and action, along with belief in the heart; speech by the tongue and action by the limbs. These two are like a pair, inseparable and interconnected. There is no īmān without action, and no action without īmān... Then he said: These are the statements and actions upon which the early predecessors from the Imāms of guidance agreed. By the grace of Allah, the followers after them held to this as their model and contentment."[25]

Abū Yūsuf Yaʿqūb ibn Sufyān (d. 277 AH), may Allah have mercy on him, said: "īmān, according to Ahl al-Sunnah, is sincerity to Allah with the heart, the tongue, and the limbs. It is speech and action, and it increases and decreases. Upon this we found all those whom we encountered in our era:
in Makkah—Abū Bakr al-Ḥumaydī, ʿAbd Allāh ibn Yazīd al-Muqri';
in Madīnah—Ismāʿīl ibn Abī Uways, ʿAbd al-Malik ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Mājishūn, Muṭarrif ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Yasārī;
in Baṣrah—Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Anṣārī, al-Ḍaḥḥāk ibn Makhlad, Sulaymān ibn Ḥarb, Abū al-Walīd al-Ṭanāfisī, Abū al-Nuʿmān, ʿAbd Allāh ibn Maslamah;
in Kūfah—ʿUbayd Allāh ibn Mūsā, Abū Nuʿaym, Aḥmad ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn Yūnus;
in Wāsiṭ—ʿAmr ibn ʿAwn ibn Aws, ʿĀṣim ibn ʿAlī ibn ʿĀṣim;
in Egypt—ʿAbd Allāh ibn Ṣāliḥ (scribe of al-Layth), Saʿīd ibn Abī Maryam, al-Naḍr ibn ʿAbd al-Jabbār, Yaḥyā ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn Bukayr, Aḥmad ibn Ṣāliḥ, Aṣbagh ibn al-Faraj;
in ʿAsqalān—ibn Abī Iyās;
in al-Shām—ʿAbd al-Aʿlā ibn Mus-hir, Hishām ibn ʿAmmār, Sulaymān ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Ibrāhīm;
in Ḥimṣ—Abū al-Yamān al-Ḥakam ibn Nāfiʿ, Ḥaywah ibn Sharīḥ;
in Khurāsān—Makkī ibn Ibrāhīm, Isḥāq ibn Rāhwayh, Ṣadaqah ibn al-Faḍl.
All of them say: īmān is speech and action, and they refute the Murji'ah and reject their statements."[26]

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[24] Narrated by al-Lālikāʾī (no. 292)

[25] al-Jāmiʿ fī ʿAqāʾid wa-Rasāʾil Ahl al-Sunnah wa-al-Athar (p. 505)

[26] Narrated by al-Lālikāʾī (no. 1589).

Ḥarb al-Kirmānī (d. 280 AH), may Allah have mercy on him, said: "This is the madhhab of the Imāms of knowledge, the people of ḥadīth, and the Ahl al-Sunnah—those known and followed in this matter—from the time of the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ until this day. I met many of the scholars of Iraq, Ḥijāz, Shām, and elsewhere upon this doctrine. So whoever opposes any of these views, or casts doubt upon them, or disparages those who hold them, is a deviant, an innovator, cut off from the Jamāʿah, and removed from the way of the Sunnah and the path of truth. This is the madhhab of Aḥmad, Isḥāq ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Mukhallad, ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-Zubayr al-Ḥumaydī, Saʿīd ibn Manṣūr, and others whom we sat with and took knowledge from. Their saying was: īmān is speech, action, intention, and clinging to the Sunnah."[27]

Ājurrī (d. 360 AH), may Allah have mercy on him, said: "Know—may Allah have mercy on us and you—that the position held by the scholars of the Muslims is that īmān is obligatory upon all creation, and it is:

- Belief in the heart
- Declaration with the tongue
- Action with the limbs.

Then know—may Allah have mercy on us and you—that knowledge of the heart (belief) and affirmation is not sufficient unless it is joined with verbal affirmation (speech). And mere belief and speech are not sufficient unless joined with action by the limbs. When all three characteristics are present, a person is truly a believer. This is proven by the Qur'an, the Sunnah, and the consensus of Muslim scholars—past and present. Whoever says otherwise is a filthy Murjiʾī—beware of him in matters of your religion."[28]

Ibn Baṭṭah (d. 387 AH), may Allah have mercy on him, said: "Know—may Allah have mercy on you—that Allah, exalted be His praise and sanctified His names, has made it obligatory upon:

- The heart: to know Him, believe in Him, His Messengers, His Books, and everything brought by the Sunnah.
- The tongue: to articulate that belief and verbally affirm it.
- The limbs: to act upon everything He has commanded and obligated from actions.

None of these is sufficient without the others. A person is not a believer unless he combines all of them:

1. Believes in his heart,
2. Declares with his tongue,
3. Strives in action with his limbs.

And even then, he is not fully a believer unless:

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[27] Narrated in As-Sunnah of Ḥarb al-Kirmānī.
[28] al-Arbaʿīn of Ājurrī (no. 51)

4. He conforms to the Sunnah in all that he says and does, following the Book and the guidance of knowledge in all his statements and actions. Everything I have explained to you is what the Qur'an was revealed with, the Sunnah was established upon, and the scholars of the Ummah have unanimously agreed upon."[29]

Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 AH), may Allah have mercy on him, said: "The Salaf unanimously agreed that īmān is statement and action, and that it increases and decreases. What this means is that īmān consists of the statement of the heart and action of the heart, then the statement of the tongue and action of the limbs. As for the statement of the heart, it is the firm belief in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, and the Last Day, and included within it is belief in everything that the Messenger brought."[30]

Ibn Rajab (d. 795 AH), may Allah have mercy on him, said in His commentary of Fatḥ al-Bārī: Al-Bukhārī said, "īmān is statement and action." Most scholars have said, "It is statement and action." All of this is a consensus of the Salaf and the scholars of ḥadīth. Al-Shāfiʿī narrated the consensus of the Companions and the Tābiʿīn upon it. Abū Thawr also narrated a consensus on this view. Al-Awzāʿī said: "The predecessors did not distinguish between īmān and action." This was also stated by other scholars of the Salaf from Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jamāʿah, such as al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ and Wakīʿ ibn al-Jarrāḥ."[31]

Ibn al-Qayyim (d. 751 AH), may Allah have mercy on him, said in Zād al-Maʿād (3/531): "Imān in Allah consists of a combination of these attributes—statement and action—as held by the Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, their followers, and those who followed them. Al-Shāfiʿī mentioned this in al-Mabsūṭ, and there are around a hundred proofs from the Qur'an and Sunnah affirming it."

Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb (d. 1206 AH), may Allah have mercy on him, said: "There is no disagreement that Tawḥīd must exist in the heart, on the tongue, and through action. If any one of these is missing, the person is not a Muslim. If someone knows Tawḥīd but does not act upon it, he is a stubborn disbeliever, like Pharaoh and Iblīs and others like them."[32]

ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb (d. 1285 AH), may Allah have mercy on him, said: "Neither speech nor belief alone is sufficient without action. True, Sharʿī (legislated) īmān is not affirmed for a person unless all three are combined: belief in the heart

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[29] al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (no. 1131)
[30] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/672)
[31] Fatḥ al-Bārī by Ibn Rajab (1/5)
[32] Kashf al-Shubuhāt (p. 29)

and its action, speech with the tongue, and action with the limbs. This is the view of Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jamāʿah, both the early and later generations."[33]

Sulaymān ibn Suḥmān (d. 1349 AH), may Allah have mercy on him, said: "It is essential in the testimony of "Lā ilāha illa Allāh" to have belief in the heart, speech upon the tongue, and action with the limbs. If any of these types are missing, the person is not a Muslim. And if the person is a Muslim outwardly, acting upon the limbs, then says or does or believes something that contradicts that, his statement "Lā ilāha illa Allāh" will not benefit him. The evidence for this from the Qur'an, Sunnah, and the statements of the Imāms of Islam is too abundant to be fully enumerated.

Early Murji'ah explicitly stated action is not from imaan, all groups of Murji'ah agree with this – jahmiyyah, Ashāʿirah, maturidiyyah etc. they all agree īmān is valid without action, although they differed on what constitutes iman . Some said tasdiq and speech and others said mere knowledge while others claimed speech only."[34]

The Murji'ah of our time, combined contradiction either due to ignorance or out of disregard of this matter, outwardly they agree with Salaf, but then they state that action is only a condition of perfection in imaan or a branch of iman , thus **they affirmed īmān for someone without actions, returning to the doctrine of the Murji'ah**.

This was acknowledged by the Jahmī, Murji'ī, Ḥanafī al-Kawtharī in his book Ta'nīb al-Khaṭīb, where he said: "In the time of Abū Ḥanīfah and afterward, there were righteous people who believed that īmān was statement and action, and that it increased and decreased. They would accuse those who believed īmān consisted of creed and speech alone of being Murji'ah—despite this being the clear truth. These righteous people, by holding such a view, essentially aligned themselves with the Muʿtazilah or the Khawārij , especially if they considered opposing beliefs to be heresy or misguidance. For abandoning any action—which in their view is a pillar of īmān—would amount to abandoning īmān itself. Thus, whoever omitted an action would be, in their eyes, outside the fold of īmān—either falling into disbelief, as the Khawārij claim, or into a state between belief and disbelief, as the Muʿtazilah believe."

Al-Kawtharī continued: "These individuals were strongly opposed to both the Khawārij and the Muʿtazilah. So if they also oppose the views of Abū Ḥanīfah and his companions and the rest of the scholars in this matter, then their words become incoherent and meaningless. However, if they consider action to be merely a completion of īmān, then there is no reason for

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[33] Fatḥ al-Majīd (p. 348)
[34] Ad-Durar as-Saniyyah (2/350)

mutual condemnation or conflict. Yet their extreme rigidity in this issue clearly shows that they do not regard action as just a perfection of īmān, but rather as an essential pillar of it—as you can see."

He also said in Tarraḥīb bi-Naqd al-Ta'nīb: "With those who see action as a mere perfection of īmān, there is no real disagreement that would justify harsh speech between the two views."

Thus, this Ḥanafī Murji'ī deduced from the strict stance of the Salaf against opponents on this matter that they considered action to be an essential pillar of īmān, and that they did not affirm the validity of a person's īmān without it. Had they believed, like the Murji'ah of today, that action is merely a perfection of īmān, there would have been no real disagreement between them and the Murji'ah—making the dispute merely verbal and without consequence. But in reality, both sides differ in substance: **the Salaf did not affirm īmān for one devoid of action, while the Murji'ah did**.

The adoption by many of the later scholars of the Murji'ah and Jahmiyyah doctrine regarding īmān, and their removal of actions as an essential pillar of it, and their validation of a person's īmān without action, and their claim that actions are merely a condition of perfection in īmān:

Many later scholars, from the commentators of the Qur'ān and those involved in hadith – have followed the path of the jahmiyyah, Murji'ah and Ashā'irah in the matter of īmān, they removed actions from īmān and validated īmān without actions. **They did by claiming action is merely a condition of perfection in īmān or a branch from its branches. They accuse those who regard action as a pillar of īmān - without which īmān is invalid - of being among the extreme kharijites**. Outwardly they agree with the Salaf but in reality they contradict and agree with the Murji'ah.

Ibn Taymiyyah said: "As for al-Ash'arī, what is known of him and his companions is that they agreed with Jahm (Ibn Ṣafwān) in his view on īmān—that it is nothing more than inner affirmation or knowledge of the heart; although, at the same time, they sometimes outwardly express the statements of Ahl al-Ḥadīth, and reinterpret them."[35]

And he also said:"Many of the later scholars are unable to distinguish between the doctrines of the Salaf and the statements of the Murji'ah and Jahmiyyah, due to how intermingled these ideas have become in the words of many. Some of these individuals, deep down, hold the views of the Jahmiyyah and Murji'ah concerning īmān, while also revering the Salaf and Ahl al-Ḥadīth, thus imagining they are reconciling both views—or reconciling the statements of their own ilk with those of the Salaf."[36]

Shaykh Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb said in his letter to 'Abdullāh ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Laṭīf: "What should make it easier for you to oppose those who go against the truth—even if they are the most learned, intelligent, and prominent of people, and even if the majority follows them—is the fact that this ummah has split in its understanding of the fundamentals of religion and the attributes of Allah. Most of those who claim knowledge today follow the theologians, calling the path of the Prophet ﷺ 'crude' (ḥashw), or accusing it of 'anthropomorphism' and 'corporealism.' Yet if you were to examine a single book of theological rhetoric (kalām)—even though they claim this knowledge is obligatory upon every Muslim and is the very foundation of religion—you would find that the book, from beginning to end, does not rely on a single verse of the Qur'an or a hadith of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, except to twist

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[35] Al-Nubuwwāt (1/580)
[36] Majmū' al-Fatāwā (7/364)

and distort them. They themselves admit that their foundations are not derived from revelation, but from their intellects, and they confess that they differ from the Salaf in this. This is similar to what was mentioned in Fatḥ al-Bārī in the matter of īmān, where al-Bukhārī said: 'īmān is statement and action; it increases and decreases.' It was mentioned that the Salaf unanimously agreed on this, and that al-Shāfiʿī transmitted this consensus, and likewise al-Bukhārī himself. Yet despite that, the compiler [i.e. Ibn Ḥajar] later narrated the views of the later scholars without refuting them!"[37]

Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb said, while speaking about al-Bayḍāwī, Abū al-Suʿūd, al-Qasṭallānī, and others among the later Ashʿarīs : "As for those commentators mentioned, they are among the later generations who were raised in estrangement from the religion. The later scholars tend to rely on the expressions of the mutakallimūn (theologians), in opposition to what the Salaf and the Imāms of Islam were upon — in matters of irjāʾ (postponing actions from being part of īmān), denial of the wisdom of Allah, taʾwīl (figurative interpretation) of Allah's attributes, and stripping them of their meanings. This resembles what is found in al-Kashshāf of al-Zamakhsharī. irjāʾ and jabr (fatalism) stand in contrast to denial of al-qadar (divine decree), and both are at extreme opposites. Each has opposed what Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamāʿah were upon."[38]

This is the state of many later scholars regarding iman. They transmit the Salafs words while they undermine and reinterpret them. Some examples below of statements, with a reminder of an important point: despite their differing paths and beliefs — whether Murji'ah, jahmiyyah, Ashāʿirah, or others — and their disagreements on the nature of īmān and what constitutes belief, they all agree on excluding ʿamal (action) from īmān and affirming the correctness of a person's imān without it.

At-Ṭaḥāwī (d. 321 AH) said in his ʿAqīdah Ṭaḥāwīyyah: "Īmān is affirmation by the tongue and belief in the heart. Everything that has been authentically reported from the Messenger of Allah (ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam) from the Sharʿ and its explanations is truth. Īmān is one, and its people are equal in its foundation, and they vary in fear of Allah, piety, resisting desires, and commitment to what is best."

He didn't mention action is part of iman , he also affirmed he is a follower of Abu Hanifa, Abu Yusuf, etc. who are among the Imāms of the Murji'ah.

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[37] Ad-Durar al-Saniyyah (1/50–51)
[38] ad-Durar al-Saniyyah (11/171)

Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ashʿarī (d. 350 AH) said: "Īmān is belief in the heart. As for verbal confession and bodily actions, they are its branches. Whoever believes in the heart — meaning he affirms the oneness of Allah and acknowledges the messengers, believing them in what they brought from Allah — then his īmān is valid, even if he dies upon that in the moment, he is a believer who will be saved."[39]

This is the view of the jahmiyyah regarding īmān, for to them, īmān is merely belief or maʿrifah (knowledge) <u>without speech or action.</u>

Ibn Ḥazm (d. 456 AH) said: "Whoever abandons all actions: he is a sinful believer, deficient in imān, but not a disbeliever."[40]

He also said in al-Durra: "One is not deemed a disbeliever for abandoning action, but is for abandoning speech — because the Messenger of Allah (ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam) declared disbelief upon one who refused to speak, even if he knew the truth in his heart. And he declared salvation from the Fire for one who believed in his heart and spoke with his tongue, even if he never performed a single righteous action."

Al-Bayhaqī said in al-Iʿtiqād (p. 175): Most of the ḥadīth scholars held that the name īmān encompasses acts of obedience, both obligatory and recommended, and that they fall into three categories:

a) A category the abandonment of which constitutes disbelief (kufr), and that is the iʿtiqād (belief) in what must be believed and the iqrār (affirmation) of what one has believed.

<u>This reflects the view of the jahmiyyah in restricting kufr (disbelief) to belief alone</u>. As for Ahl al-Sunnah, kufr occurs through belief, speech, and action.

b) A category the abandonment of which results in fisq (open sinfulness) or disobedience, but not kufr (disbelief), as long as it is not denied. This includes the obligatory acts of obedience such as ṣalāh (prayer), zakāh (almsgiving), ṣawm (fasting), ḥajj (pilgrimage), and avoiding forbidden acts.

c) A category, the abandonment of which results in a person missing what is best, but he is neither fāsiq (a sinner) nor a kāfir (disbeliever). These are the voluntary acts of worship.

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[39] al-Milal wa al-Niḥal by al-Shahrastānī (1/101)
[40] al-Muḥallā (79)

Al-Qāḍī ʿIyāḍ al-Mālikī (d. 544 AH) — one of the Imāms of the Ashʿarīs — said while discussing īmān (imān): "Its reality in the linguistic sense is taṣdīq (affirmation), and in the terminology of the Sharīʿah, it is affirmation by the heart and tongue. Once this is achieved, it constitutes the saving īmān that protects from eternal punishment in the Fire. However, the perfection of this imān that saves from entering it at all comes through complete observance of the traits of islām."[41]

Al-Shahrastānī (d. 547 AH) said: "It is known with certainty that action is not part of īmān as a foundational component, such that its absence would render one a disbeliever, removing him from īmān instantly and condemning him to punishment and eternal Hellfire thereafter. Nor is it something outside of īmān entirely, such that its absence would not entail blame and reprimand in this world or punishment in the Hereafter."[42]

Al-Ghazālī (d. 505 AH) said: "If you ask: 'It seems that the preferred view is that īmān exists without action, but it is well known that the Salaf said: īmān is belief, speech, and action — what does that mean?' We say: It is not far-fetched to count action as part of īmān because it completes and perfects it."[43]

Al-ʿIzz ibn ʿAbd al-Salām (d. 660 AH) — one of the leading Ashʿarī scholars — explained the reality of īmān as: "The affirmation (taṣdīq) of the heart of what the Lord has obligated to affirm — and this is the true īmān. As for metaphorical īmān: it refers to performing every act of obedience and avoiding every sin, because these are caused by the true īmān." He said: "True īmān resides in the heart, and metaphorical īmān resides in the limbs."[44]

an-Nawawī al-Shāfiʿī (d. 676 AH) said in Sharḥ Muslim (4/2): "The linguistic root of īmān is taṣdīq, and in the Sharīʿah it is affirmation by the heart and tongue. The outward rulings of the Sharīʿah apply īmān to actions, as seen in the ḥadīth: 'Its best is Lā ilāha illā Allāh, and its least is removing harm from the road.' We have explained earlier that the perfection of īmān is through actions and its completion is through acts of obedience."

Al-Kirmānī (d. 786 AH) said in his commentary on Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī (1/77): "As for us [i.e. the Ashʿarīs], īmān is with the word, and if he says it, we judge him a believer by consensus, without difference. The debate is not truly about īmān itself. As for its perfection, there is consensus that it requires the three: speech, action, and belief."

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[41] al-Muʿallim fī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim (1/203)
[42] Nihāyat al-Iqdām fī ʿIlm al-Kalām (p. 475)
[43] Qawāʿid al-ʿAqāʾid (p. 258)
[44] Fatāwā al-Mawṣilīyah (p. 7), Maʿnā al-Īmān wa-al-Islām (p. 9)

Al-Subkī al-Shāfiʿī (d. 771 AH) said: "The madhhab of the Salaf is that īmān is knowledge in the heart, affirmation by the tongue, and action by the limbs, and that it increases and decreases, but it does not vanish due to the absence of actions."[45]

He was also asked: "Are actions part of the definition of īmān?" He replied: "It is widely known from the Salaf that actions are included in īmān. However, the absence of actions does not necessarily mean the absence of īmān. He also said: 'The absence of action does not eliminate īmān.'"[46]

Al-ʿAynī al-Ḥanafī (d. 855 AH) said: "As for us: īmān is established by the kalimah (the statement of imān), so if one pronounces it, we judge him to be a believer, by consensus and without dispute. And do not overlook that the dispute is about the essence of īmān, but as for its perfection, then there is consensus that it requires all three: belief, speech, and action."[47]

Al-Qasṭallānī (d. 923 AH) said: "The statement of the Salaf: 'Belief of the heart, pronouncement by the tongue, and actions by the limbs' — they meant by this that actions are a condition for its perfection."[48]

Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī (d. 974 AH) said: "Īmān is affirmation (taṣdīq) of what is known necessarily from the religion — generally in general matters, and in detail in detailed matters. The condition for the morally responsible person (mukallaf) to be absolved of duty is verbalization of it. Otherwise, he will dwell in Hellfire eternally — by consensus of Ahl al-Sunnah, as stated by al-Nawawī. However, many scholars inclined toward his salvation due to the imān in his heart, while speech and actions of the limbs are not included [in the essence], but are a condition for the perfection of īmān."[49]

He also said: "actions are, according to us and most of the muḥaddithūn, part of īmān — that is, of its perfection."[50]

Mullā ʿAlī al-Qārī al-Ḥanafī al-Māturīdī (d. 1014 AH) said: "Inaction, the essence of īmān is indivisible. Its perfection, however, lies in the addition of righteous actions, because Allah — when praising the complete believers — conjoined actions with imān in His words: 'Inaction, those who believe and do righteous actions…' [al-Baqarah: 277]. And it is known that the

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[45] al-Sayf al-Maslūl (p. 412)
[46] Fatāwā al-Ḥadīthiyyah (pp. 54–55)
[47] ʿUmdat al-Qārī (1/109)
[48] Irshād al-Sārī (1/86)
[49] al-Taʿrīf fī al-Uṣūlayn wa-al-Taṣawwuf (p. 117)
[50] al-Minaḥ al-Makkiyyah (3/1340)

default rule in conjunction is difference. As for saying that actions are literally a part of īmān, that is the view of the Khawārij and Muʿtazilah."[51]

He also said: "Actions of the limbs are the perfection of īmān and the beauty of iḥsān."[52]

Al-Bājūrī al-Ashʿarī (d. 1277 AH) said: "...Action is a condition of perfection — this is the preferred view among Ahl al-Sunnah [i.e., the Ashʿarīs]. Whoever performs it has attained perfection. And whoever leaves it is still a believer, though he has deprived himself of perfection — unless his abandonment is due to deeming it permissible (istiḥlāl), or obstinacy against the Lawgiver, or doubting its obligation — in which case he is a disbeliever regarding what is known by necessity in the religion."[53]

Al-Ṣāwī said in his commentary on al-Jawharah (p. 132): "The preferred view among Ahl al-Sunnah [i.e., the Ashʿarīs] is that righteous actions are a condition for the perfection of īmān."

Aḥmad al-Nafrawī al-Mālikī al-Ashʿarī (d. 1126 AH) said: "This is to refute the misconception that actions are a condition for the validity of īmān — they are not. Rather, the relied-upon view is that actions of the limbs are a condition for the perfection of īmān, according to Ahl al-Sunnah. In conclusion: actions are part of the complete īmān."[54]

Al-Kawtharī al-Ḥanafī al-Jahmī (d. 1371 AH) said in his commentary on al-Radd ʿalā Ahl al-Ahwā' by al-Malṭī (p. 41): "Actions of the limbs are from the perfection of īmān, not from its essence — so as not to fall into the doctrines of the Muʿtazilah and Khawārij ."

Aḥmad Ḥijāzī al-Saqqā al-Ashʿarī said: "According to the Ashʿarī view, action are a condition for the perfection of īmān, and īmān is not lost by their absence."[55]

These are some statements of the later scholars from the Murji'ah, Jahmiyyah, Ashāʿirah and those who left the path of Ahl As-Sunnah in this matter. **They all agreed a person's īmān is valid even if one excludes action. Even if a person performs no righteous deeds while capable his īmān is valid**.

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[51] Mirqāt al-Mafātīḥ (8/3209)
[52] Sharḥ al-Fiqh al-Akbar (p. 103)
[53] Sharḥ Jawharat al-Tawḥīd (p. 72)
[54] al-Fawākih al-Dawānī ʿalā Risālat Ibn Abī Zayd al-Qayrawānī (1/93)
[55] al-Bayān fī ʿIlm al-Tawḥīd (2/37)

As for the claim that "action is a condition of perfection or a branch from its branches", this is an innovation with nothing from the Salaf or the Imāms of the sunnah. Shaykh Albani was also one who fell into this error:

Shaykh Albānī said: "All righteous deeds are a condition for the perfection of īmān according to Ahl al-Sunnah — unlike the Khawārij and Muʿtazilah, who declare the people of major sins to be eternally in Hell, with the Khawārij explicitly excommunicating them. So if someone were to claim that prayer is a condition for the validity of īmān, and that one who abandons it will dwell in Hell forever — he has aligned with the Khawārij in part of their statement. And even worse, he has contradicted the ḥadīth of intercession."[56]

Al-Albānī said: "What we understand from the evidences of the Qur'an and the Sunnah, and from the statements of the Imāms — among the Companions, the Tābiʿīn, and the mujtahid Imāms — is that anything beyond internal imān (ʿamal qalbī) and that relates to physical deeds (ʿamal badanī) is a condition for kamāl (perfection), not a condition for validity."[57]

He was asked: "Is it correct that someone who dies upon tawḥīd — even if he does not act upon its requirements (the first of which being ṣalāh) — is he to be judged as a disbeliever who will abide in Hell like the disbelieving polytheist, or not? He replied: "The Salaf differentiated between īmān and ʿamal, making deeds a condition for the kamāl of īmān, not a condition for its validity— contrary to the Khawārij ."[58]

Dr. Muḥammad Abū Raḥīm — one of al-Albānī's students — clarified in a book titled Ḥaqīqat al-Īmān ʿinda al-Shaykh al-Albānī, which was introduced by Muḥammad Shaqrah (also one of his senior students), that al-Albānī's definition of īmān is: "statement (qawl), belief (iʿtiqād), and action (ʿamal), and action is a condition for its kamāl." He added: This is the definition of īmān according to Shaykh al-Albānī, from which there is no escape for anyone who understands Arabic and knows the speech of the Arabs. He also stated that al-Albānī was influenced in this view by the statement of Ibn Ḥajar — due to the high regard he held for Ibn Ḥajar's methodological and ḥadīth-based principles.

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[56] Ḥukm Tārik al-Ṣalāh (p. 41)
[57] Mawsūʿat al-Albānī (4/155)
[58] Mawsūʿat al-Albānī (5/636)

The response to contemporary "scholars"; those who claim righteous deeds are only a condition or branch for īmān to be complete and īmān can be valid without action

When the view spread that righteous action is only a condition for the perfection of īmān, and merely a branch of it—and that a person's imān remains valid even without it—this opinion became prevalent in the books of later exegetes and hadith commentators. **Many who affiliate themselves with the Sunnah and Salafiyyah adopted it, teaching it to their students and affirming it in their books, lessons, and websites.**

They attributed this Murji'ah doctrine—of separating action from imān—to the creed of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamāʿah. They even began to fight those who hold that action is an essential component of imān and that a person's imān is invalid without it if he has the ability [to act]. **They accused such people of being upon the way of the Khawārij and warned strongly against them!**

The Permanent Committee for Scholarly Research and Iftāʾ (Saudi Arabia) said:
"This statement is the view of the Murji'ah, who exclude deeds from the essence of imān. They claim that imān is only affirmation of the heart—or affirmation of the heart and tongue. As for actions, they consider them only a condition of perfection, not part of imān itself. So according to them, whoever affirms with his heart and tongue is a complete believer—even if he abandons obligations and commits prohibitions—and he deserves Paradise even if he never did a single good deed." [59]

Shaykh Ibn Bāz responded to a question regarding Ibn Ḥajar's statement that the Salaf considered actions as a condition of completion in īmān. He said: "No, it is a part of īmān, not a condition. Īmān is speech, action, and belief; that is, affirmation." He was asked: "Some say it is part of īmān but a condition of completion?" He replied: "No, it is not a condition of completion; it is part of īmān. This is the view of the Murji'ah, who believe that īmān is just affirmation and belief."[60]

Shaykh Ṣāliḥ al-Fawzān, in his commentary on the Nūnīyah of Ibn al-Qayyim, when listing the groups of Murji'ah, said: "There is a fifth group that has appeared recently, those who say that actions are a condition for the completion of obligatory īmān or desirable completion."[61]

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[59] Fatwa No. 5411 (Vol. 2, p. 127)
[60] Majallat al-Mishkāh (2/279-280)
[61] Nūnīyah of Ibn al-Qayyim Commentary by Shaykh Ṣāliḥ al-Fawzān (2/647)

The one who is truly guided is he who supports the statements of the Salaf in this issue, speaks as they spoke, refrains from what they refrained from, and does not follow a path other than theirs in these matters.

My fellow brothers, adhere to what the Salaf of this Ummah and the early scholars of ʾAthar were upon in the matters of Sunnah and creed, and to those who followed their path and traced their footsteps. Do not turn to those who opposed them and followed a different way, no matter who they are.

Status is not based on titles, degrees, or positions, or the abundance of books and writings—but rather in following and emulating the predecessors. They used to say: "We will never go astray as long as we hold fast to the ʾAthar, and to the people of ʾAthar." For the people of ʾAthar used to say: There is no īmān without action, and no action without īmān; they are two inseparable companions.

Statement of the Imāms of the Salaf and Ahl As-Sunnah that there is no īmān without action, and no action without īmān and that neither is valid without the other.

The madhab of Ahl As-Sunnah both early and later generation is there is no īmān except with actions and no action without īmān and they are inseparable - one is not valid without the other.

whoever Allāh grants tawfīq and intends good for him, follows them in this matter, says as they said, refrains from what they refrained from, and does not oppose their consensus by following others who contradicted the Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ in matters of īmān, or by chasing after ambiguous statements of some later scholars—even among those known for Sunnah and Salafī orientation.

As Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī (d. 131 AH) said: "I do not know anyone among the people of desires except that he disputes using ambiguous matters."[62]

ʿUthmān ibn Saʿīd al-Dāramī said: "Whoever seeks to deviate from the truth follows the rare sayings of the scholars and clings to their slips. But whoever desires the truth within himself follows the well-known sayings of the majority, and turns with the majority. These are two signs by which a man's following or innovation is known."[63]

Ājurrī said: "The sign that Allāh wants good for a person is that he follows this path: the Book of Allāh, the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, the Sunnah of his Companions, and those who followed them with excellence; and what the Imāms of the Muslims in every land were upon until the end of the time of the scholars—like al-Awzāʿī, Sufyān al-Thawrī, Mālik ibn Anas, al-Shāfiʿī, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, al-Qāsim ibn Sallām, and those upon their way—while avoiding every madhhab that those scholars did not follow."[64]

May Allāh have mercy on Imām al-Awzāʿī, who said: "Bind yourself to the Sunnah. Stand where the people stood. Say what they said. Refrain from what they refrained from. Follow the path of your righteous predecessors—for what was sufficient for them is sufficient for you."[65]

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[62] al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (no. 835)
[63] ar-Rad 'ala al-Jahmiyyah (no. 154)
[64] Kitab al-Sharīʿah by Ājurrī (25)
[65] Narrated by al-Lālakāʾī (no. 287)

Abū al-ʿĀliyah (d. 90 AH) said regarding the verse ṣadaqū [al-Baqarah 177]: "They spoke the words of īmān and fulfilled it through action."[66]

Saʿīd ibn Jubayr (d. 95 AH) said: "A statement is not accepted without action. An action is not accepted without statement. Neither statement nor action is accepted without intention. And none of the three are accepted unless the intention conforms to the Sunnah."[67]

al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110 AH) said: "Speech is not valid without action, and speech and action are not valid without intention, and speech, action, and intention are not valid without the Sunnah."[68]

He also said: "Allāh does not accept speech without action—from whoever speaks and acts well, Allāh accepts it from him."[69]

He also said: "Īmān is speech, and its reality is action. So if the speech is not fulfilled by action, the speech is of no benefit."[70]

ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿUbayd ibn ʿUmayr (d. 113 AH) said: "Īmān in Allāh is with action, and action is with īmān, and one is not valid without the other, until both are presented together toward good, if Allāh wills."[71]

Furāt ibn Sulaymān said: We arrived with Maymūn ibn Mihrān (d. 117 AH) at Dayr al-Qā'im. He looked at the monk and said to his companions: "Among you, is there anyone whose worship equals this monk's?" They said: "No." He said: "Then what benefit is that to him if he does not believe in Muḥammad?" They said: "It benefits him nothing." He said: "Likewise, a statement without action is of no benefit."[72]

Qatādah (d. 117 AH) said: Allāh does not accept a statement without action.[73]

Ḥassān ibn ʿAṭiyyah said: Īmān in the Book of Allāh became tied to action. He said: "Verily, the believers are only those whose hearts tremble when Allāh is mentioned, and when His verses are

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[66] Kitab al-Sharīʿah by Ājurrī (316)
[67] al-Lālakā'ī (no. 34)
[68] as-Sunnah by Ḥarb (no. 132); al-Sharīʿah by Ājurrī (258)
[69] Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī (19/340)
[70] al-Sharīʿah by Ājurrī (316)
[71] al-Lālakā'ī (no. 1435)
[72] Tārīkh al-Raqqah, p. 44
[73] Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī (19/340)

recited to them, it increases them in īmān, and they rely upon their Lord" [al-Anfāl]. Then He connected them to action: "Those who establish prayer and spend from what We have provided for them—such are the true believers. For them are degrees with their Lord, and forgiveness, and a generous provision."[74]

Al-Zuhrī (d. 125 AH) said: "We used to say: Islām is by affirmation (iqrār), and īmān is by action. Īmān is speech and action—two companions that are not valid except together."[75]

Zayd ibn Aslam (d. 136 AH) said: "You must do an action by which you verify your īmān."[76]

Al-Awzāʿī (d. 157 AH) said: "I met those who I met from the early generation of this ummah—they did not differentiate between īmān and action. He also said, holding up his two fingers: Īmān and action are like these two—no īmān without action, and no action without īmān."[77]

He also said: "Īmān is not sound without speech, speech is not sound without action, and īmān, speech, and action are not sound without intention and conformity to the Sunnah. Those who came before us from the Salaf never separated īmān and action. Action is part of īmān, and īmān is part of action."[78]

Al-Walīd ibn Muslim said: I heard al-Awzāʿī (d. 157 AH), Mālik ibn Anas (d. 179 AH), and Saʿīd ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz (d. 167 AH) all denounce those who say: "Īmān is speech without action." They used to say: "There is no īmān without action, and no action without īmān."[79]

Dāwūd ibn Abī Hind (d. 140 AH) said: "A statement is not sound except with action, and neither statement nor action are sound except with intention, and neither statement, action, nor intention are sound except with an intention that conforms to the Sunnah."[80]

Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAmr ibn ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān (d. 145 AH) said: No statement is sound except with action.[81]

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[74] al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (no.1344)
[75] Narrated by Abū ʿAmr al-Ṭalamankī, as in Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/295)
[76] Kitāb al-Īmān by Ibn Abī Shaybah (no. 136)
[77] al-Sunnah by Ḥarb (no. 130)
[78] al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (no. 1183)
[79] al-Lālakāʾī (no. 1441)
[80] Uṣūl al-Sunnah by Ibn Abī Zamanīn (no. 134)
[81] al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh (no. 694)

Sufyān al-Thawrī (d. 161 AH) said: “No statement is sound except with action.”[82]

He also said: The jurists used to say: “A statement is not sound except with action, nor are statement and action sound except with intention, and neither are sound without conformity to the Sunnah.”[83]

Muḥammad ibn Muslim al-Ṭā’ifī (d. 177 AH) said: “No statement is sound except with action.”[84]

Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ (d. 187 AH) said: “No statement is sound except with action.”[85]

Wakīʿ ibn al-Jarrāḥ (d. 196 AH) said: “The people of īmān said: A statement is not sufficient unless accompanied by action, belief, and correct conformity to the Sunnah.”[86]

Sufyān ibn ʿUyaynah (d. 198 AH) said: “We took this from those before us—[that] īmān is statement and action, and that there can be no statement without action.”[87]

Al-Ḥumaydī (d. 219 AH) said in his creed (3): “Īmān is statement and action; it increases and decreases. No statement is beneficial without action, and no statement and action without intention, and neither with intention unless according to the Sunnah.”

Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (d. 241 AH) said: “Īmān does not exist except with action.”[88]

Al-Muzanī (d. 264 AH) said: “There is no īmān without action, and no action without īmān.”[89]

Sahl ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Tustarī (d. 283 AH) said: “Īmān that is mere speech without action is disbelief; if it is speech and action without intention, it is hypocrisy; and if it includes speech, action, and intention but lacks the Sunnah, it is innovation.”[90]

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[82] al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh (no. 681)
[83] al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (no. 1185)
[84] al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh (no. 680)
[85] al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh (no. 680)
[86] Dhamm al-Kalām by al-Harawī (no. 481)
[87] al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh (no. 716)
[88] al-Sunnah by al-Khallāl (no. 946)
[89] Sharḥ al-Sunnah by Al-Muzanī (no. 8)
[90] al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (no. 1196)

Al-Ājurrī said: “Knowledge in the heart and affirmation do not suffice unless accompanied by verbal affirmation; and knowledge and speech do not suffice unless accompanied by action of the limbs.”[91]

He also said: “Religion is not correct except by belief in the heart, verbal acknowledgment, and physical action—like prayer, zakāh, fasting, ḥajj, jihād, and the like.”[92]

Ibn Baṭṭah (d. 387 AH) said: “I have recited to you from the Book of Allāh what is evident to the rational believers—that īmān is statement and action, and that one who affirms with speech but abandons action is a denier, outside the bounds of īmān. Allāh does not accept speech without action, nor action without speech.”[93]

Al-Baghawī (d. 516 AH) said: “The religion (al-dīn) will not be in a state of acceptance and approval unless affirmation (al-taṣdīq) is joined with action (al-ʿamal).”[94]

Ibn al-Ḥanbalī, ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Shīrāzī (d. 536 AH), said: “It is also evident that al-īmān (imān) is both qawl (statement) and ʿamal (action), as Allāh the Exalted said: “To Him ascends the good word , and the righteous deed raises it.” [Sūrat Fāṭir; 10] So Allāh informed us that the statement does not ascend except with the action; since the action is what lifts it. This indicates that any statement that is not accompanied by action will not be elevated.

And Allāh the Exalted also said: “Indeed, those who believed and did righteous deeds will have the Gardens of al-Firdaws as a lodging.” [Sūrat al-Kahf] Thus, He informed that whoever’s action does not accompany his statement has no share in Paradise. And He said: “Indeed, I am Forgiving to whoever repents, believes, and does righteous deeds, and then remains guided.” [Sūrat Ṭā Hā] So He, Exalted is He, informed us that forgiveness is only for the one who combines both statement and action—neither benefits without the other.

And He said: “Indeed, those who believe and do righteous deeds, they are the best of creatures.” [Sūrat al-Bayyinah] So He described that al-īmān is qawl and ʿamal, and that a statement is not beneficial without action, just as action is not beneficial without statement.”[95]

Al-ʿImrānī al-Shāfiʿī (d. 558 AH) said: “Allāh has informed us in the Qurʾān that He only admits servants into Paradise through īmān and ʿamal in numerous verses. And He never

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[91] al-Sharīʿah by Ājurrī (304)
[92] al-Sharīʿah by Ājurrī (252)
[93] al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (no. 1175)
[94] Sharḥ al-Sunnah by Al-Baghawī (1/11)
[95] al-Risālah al-Wāḍiḥah (2/802)

mentioned in the Qur'ān entering Paradise without action. Rather, He informed that He forgives whom He wills and punishes whom He wills, and that He does not forgive shirk.

The Qur'ān does not contradict itself; rather, its parts support one another. And it was narrated from ʿAlī and Ibn Masʿūd that they said: A statement does not benefit without action, nor action without statement, nor statement and action without intention, nor intention without conformity to the Sunnah. Similar reports have been transmitted from al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Sufyān al-Thawrī, Ibn Jurayj, Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAmr ibn ʿUthmān, Mālik ibn Anas, al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ, Wakīʿ, al-Shāfiʿī, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, al-Walīd, Abū Bakr ibn ʿAyyāsh, and ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-Mubārak—those are scholars whose mention brings no unease."[96]

Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 AH) said: "There is no īmān without ʿamal, and no ʿamal without resolve (ʿaqd). And it is like the external and internal acts—each is tied to the other: the actions of the limbs (aʿmāl al-jawāriḥ) and the actions of the heart (aʿmāl al-qulūb). Like the saying of the Prophet ﷺ: "Actions are only by intentions." Meaning, there is no action without resolve and intention, for innamā is a term of restriction and exclusivity. So he established by that, the physical actions (al-muʿāmalāt) and the inner actions (al-niyyāt). Action is to īmān like the lips are to the tongue—speech is not sound without both. For the lips gather the letters, and the tongue articulates the speech. If one is lost, speech becomes invalid. Likewise, with the loss of action, īmān vanishes."[97]

Ibn al-Qayyim (d. 751 AH) said: "Al-īmān has an outer and an inner aspect. Its outer aspect is the statement of the tongue and the actions of the limbs, and its inner aspect is the heart's belief, submission, and love. An outer display without inner reality is of no benefit—even if it spares one's blood, wealth, and progeny. And an inner belief without outer action is not accepted—unless action is genuinely prevented due to incapacity, coercion, or fear of destruction. So, the absence of visible actions without a valid excuse indicates a corrupt inner state void of īmān. Its deficiency points to weak īmān, and its strength reflects strong īmān."[98]

This is the speech of the leading figures of Ahl As-Sunnah. They are upon agreement, there is no īmān without action and no action without īmān and they are inseparable – one cannot exist without the other.

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[96] al-Intiṣār fī al-Radd ʿalā al-Muʿtazilah al-Qadariyyah al-Ashrār (2/768)
[97] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/334)
[98] al-Fawā'id by Ibn Qayyim (p. 124)

Murji'ah divide īmān into Foundation (Asl) and branch (Far') to deny the essential nature of action

The Murji'ah of our time abandon the narrations mentioned prior. They focus on words of some recent scholars who divide Asl and Far', misrepresenting those words to fall in line with the understanding of the Murji'ah. They do so to argue these scholars supported their view of excluding the essential nature of actions from īmān, presenting them as branches that do not invalidate īmān if omitted.

Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ashʿarī said: "Īmān is the belief in the heart. As for the statement of the tongue and the actions of the limbs, they are its branches. Whoever believes in his heart—that is, affirms the oneness of Allāh and acknowledges the messengers with belief in what they brought from Allāh—his īmān is valid, and if he dies upon that, he is a believer and saved."[99]

al-Bayhaqī and al-Ḥalīmī divided īmān into aṣl and farʿ, stating: "Aṣl: Belief in Allāh and His Messenger, which removes one from disbelief. Farʿ: Actions, which complete and perfect īmān, and whose absence does not cause disbelief."

Al-Bayhaqī further differentiated between īmān bi'llāh (belief in Allāh) and īmān li'llāh (belief for the sake of Allāh), stating that the verbal declaration and belief constitute īmān bi'llāh, while the actions of the heart and limbs are īmān li'llāh.

The outcome of this distinction—according to him and al-Ḥalīmī—is that disbelief is the opposite of īmān bi'llāh, not īmān li'llāh. Therefore, abandoning the two types of actions—those of the heart and limbs—does not constitute disbelief![100]

Now, this division is accurate if we interpret it in the light of the view of the Salaf al-ṣāliḥ. **They maintained that īmān is both statement and action, with both an outward and inward aspect. Just as statement and action are inseparable, so too are aṣl and farʿ inseparable—one cannot exist without the other. The aṣl is invalid and unacceptable without its complementary farʿ, and it is inconceivable for true īmān to exist without the latter.**

Thus, whoever asserts tawḥīd, verbal affirmation, and belief (which constitute the aṣl) must also perform the actions that validate and testify to the truth of this foundation. These actions,

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[99] al-Milal wa al-Niḥal by al-Shahrastānī (1/101)
[100] al-Īmān ʿinda al-Salaf (2/304)

which include the duties of the limbs, serve as confirmation of one's inner īmān. If one fails to perform them, it would be as if they are denying the truth of their own imān, The inward imān cannot exist in the heart without outward action.

As Ājurrī stated: "The actions of the limbs are a confirmation of the īmān in the heart and tongue. Whoever does not affirm their imān with actions—such as purification, prayer, zakāh, fasting, pilgrimage, jihad, and other similar duties—will not be a believer. Knowledge and verbal affirmation alone will not suffice, and neglecting action will contradict one's belief."[101]

Ibn Taymiyyah said: "When the heart is righteous with its īmān—both knowledge and inward actions—it is necessarily reflected in the body through verbal expression and actions of imān, as the Ahl al-ḥadīth have said: There is statement and action, both inward and outward. The outward is dependent on the inward; when the inward is upright, the outward follows. If the inward is corrupted, the outward is likewise corrupted."[102]

He also said: "The Murji'ah removed outward actions from īmān. Those among them who sought to exclude inward actions by defining them as mere affirmation are in clear error. If they exclude outward actions, it must be stated: outward actions are inseparable from inward actions; the absence of the former indicates the absence of the latter."[103]

Ibn Taymiyyah said: "It is necessary to interpret a speaker's words in light of one another, to take his statements here and there, and to know what he typically intends and means by a term when he uses it, and to understand the meanings he is known to have intended in other places. Once his usual manner and intent in meanings and terms is known, this helps to understand his intention. But if one uses his words in a meaning he is not accustomed to using, and abandons the usual meaning he gives them, interpreting his words in contradiction to the known intent he has with that term, making his speech appear contradictory and not interpreting it in harmony with the rest of his speech—then that would be a distortion of his words from their place, an alteration of his intent, and a falsehood upon him."[104]

this is exactly what the Murji'at of our time have done with those they use as proof for this division—in order to negate the pillar of action. This can be clarified from several angles:

1 - Those who made this division—like Ibn Mandah, al-Marwazī, Ibn Taymiyyah, Ibn Rajab, and others—have refuted the fundamentals of the Murji'ah who validate a person's īmān

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[101] al-Sharīʿah by Ājurrī (2/304)
[102] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/187)
[103] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/544)
[104] al-Jawāb al-Ṣaḥīḥ (4/44)

without action. They authored books refuting the Murji'ah who do not affirm the pillar of action and consider a person's īmān valid merely by uttering the shahādah.

2 - Those among Ahl al-Sunnah who divide īmān into aṣl (foundation) and farʿ (branch) declare the one who abandons prayer out of laziness and negligence as a kāfir, and they transmit the consensus of the ṣaḥābah regarding that. This is something the Murjiʾat of our time completely reject and strongly oppose!

Accordingly, regarding those who made this division, it must be said either:

A - **The pillar of prayer, according to them, is from the uṣūl (foundations) of īmān, not from its branches. Thus, the īmān of a servant is not valid without it, as the evidence describing the one who abandons it as committing shirk and kufr is abundant.**

Al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ said: "The foundation of īmān with us and its branches after the shahādah and tawḥīd, after testifying to the Prophet ﷺ regarding the message, and after fulfilling the obligations are: truthfulness in speech, preserving trust, avoiding betrayal, fulfilling covenants, upholding ties of kinship, sincere advice to all Muslims, and mercy to all people."[105]

Jaʿfar ibn Burqān said: ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz wrote to us: "To proceed: indeed the ties of religion and the pillars of Islam are: belief in Allah, establishing prayer, giving zakāh—so perform the prayer at its time."[106]

Ibn Qutaybah said: "Among the foundations are prayer, zakāh, fasting, and ḥajj for whoever has the ability. This is the matter that if someone believes it is obligatory upon him and then falls short in some of it out of laziness or being preoccupied, then his īmān is deficient until he repents and returns."[107]

Abū ʿUbayd said in Kitāb al-Īmān (30)[108], after mentioning aḥādīth about modesty, fulfilling covenants, returning salām, and other branches of īmān: "All of this is from the branches of īmān."

But when he mentioned prayer and zakāh, he considered them among the foundations—proven by the fact that he deemed one who abandons them to be a kāfir, whose utterance of the shahādatayn does not benefit him while he does not perform them.

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[105] al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh (793)
[106] al-Īmān by Ibn Abī Shaybah (p. 34)
[107] al-Masāʾil wal-Ajwibah, p. 331
[108] Kitāb al-Īmān by Abū ʿUbayd al-Qāsim ibn Sallām (30)

B - Or it may be said: **their naming of bodily actions as branches of īmān does not mean that abandoning all actions is not kufr—evidenced by their takfīr of the one who abandons prayer.**

Some actions, according to them, are essential branches of īmān, whose absence nullifies the īmān of the heart. Some are from the obligatory completion of īmān, and others from its recommended completion. As Ibn Taymiyyah said while discussing this issue: "...the existence of sound branches necessitates the existence of the foundations."[109]

To further clarify: **some of those who divide īmān into foundation and branch consider the action of the tongue—pronouncing the shahādah—as a branch of īmān. According to the Murji'ah, this would mean that the statement of the tongue is a branch that can be dispensed with, and that īmān is valid without it!**

This is something said only by the Murji'at al-Jahmiyyah, who opposed the consensus of the Salaf and the Imāms of the Sunnah that the īmān of a person who is capable of pronouncing the shahādah is not valid unless he actually pronounces it.

Ibn Taymiyyah said: "As for the two testimonies (shahādatān), if one does not utter them despite being able to, then he is a kāfir by consensus of the Muslims. He is a disbeliever both inwardly and outwardly according to the Salaf of the Ummah, its Imāms, and the majority of its scholars. A group of the Murji'ah, who are Jahmiyyat al-Murji'ah—like Jahm, al-Ṣāliḥī, and their followers—held that if someone believes in his heart, then he is only a disbeliever outwardly, not inwardly. The origin of this view has already been pointed out, and it is an innovated saying in Islam that none of the Imāms ever stated."[110]

The utterance of tongue even if they say it is only a branch, they mean it is a necessary branch which if absent indicates absence of the foundation it is tied to i.e īmān. Likewise it is said regarding visible actions of limbs, they are linked to inward belief and inseparable from it, total absence indicates that no īmān remains in heart.

Ibn Taymiyyah also said: "When affirmation (taṣdīq) and love for it are present in the heart, it is necessary that the body moves in accordance with that—through visible speech and visible action. What appears on the body in speech and action is the necessary result, evidence, and effect of what is in the heart. And what occurs on the body from speech and actions also affects

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[109] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (2/382)
[110] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/609)

what is in the heart—each influences the other. But the heart is the foundation and the body is its branch, and the branch derives from its root, and the root is strengthened and affirmed by its branch."[111]

And he said: "It has become clear that religion must involve both speech and action, and that it is impossible for a man to be a believer in Allah and His Messenger in his heart—or in his heart and on his tongue—without performing any outward obligations, neither prayer nor zakāh nor fasting nor any other obligation. Whoever says that obligatory īmān is attained without doing any of the obligatory actions—whether he considers those actions necessary or part of īmān—this is a semantic dispute, and he is clearly mistaken. This is the bidʿah of irjāʾ , about which the Salaf and the Imāms spoke extensively and harshly. It is well-known what they said about its people, and prayer is the greatest, most general, foremost, and most significant of those actions."[112]

These are clear statements from Ibn Taymiyyah that no servants īmān is accepted without action. They are a sufficient refutation against the Murji'ah who may try to use more ambiguous statements to justify their evil, as they have done with many matters.

[111] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/542)
[112] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (6/621)

Those who exclude action from īmān are the ones who accuse ahl as sunnah of following the Khawārij and Muʿtazilah

The enemies of the sunnah accuse those who affirm the pillar of action and the takfīr of the one who abandons it are accused of following the way of the Khawārij of declaring muslims disbelievers.

In the issue of the Qurʾān and that it is the speech of Allah, uncreated, and the consensus of Ahl al-Sunnah on the takfīr of the one who says it is created, some people of falsehood come and oppose Ahl al-Sunnah in this matter. They promote silence regarding it, saying: "Neither say it is created nor uncreated," claiming that this is the safer path. Then they accuse those who make takfīr of those who say the Qurʾān is created of being Khawārij who declare Muslims disbelievers.

Imām Aḥmad, may Allah have mercy on him, was speaking about this great issue, affirming that the Qurʾān is the speech of Allah, uncreated, without doubt or hesitation, and he made takfīr of those who opposed this. He said: "It reached me that Abū Khālid, Mūsā ibn Manṣūr, and others sit in that area and criticize our saying, calling to the opinion that one should not say 'created' or 'uncreated,' and they criticize those who make takfīr, and they claim that we are upon the saying of the Khawārij !" Then Abū ʿAbd Allāh smiled, as if in anger, and said: "These are evil people."[113]

Similarly the Murji'ah accuse Ahl As-Sunnah of being Khawārij or saying what the Khawārij say. This is due to their ignorance of the saying of the Salaf and the Khawārij and Muʿtazilah.

The Muʿtazilah and Khawārij hold that every individual act is a pillar and part of īmān, a person cannot have reward and punishment simultaneously, for the one who commits major sin in their view exits īmān and enters kufr or is in a position between the two.

As for Ahl As-Sunnah, **they hold that the action whose abandonment makes one a disbeliever is the salah**, as indicated by many texts. As for the rest of the obligations there is ikhtilaf, as for other than this, like leaving other obligations and committing prohibited acts, the person is under the will of allah.

Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allah have mercy on him, said: "The Khawārij and the Muʿtazilah said: All acts of obedience are part of īmān. So if some of it goes, then part of īmān is gone, and thus the

[113] al-Sunnah by al-Khallāl (1793)

rest of it goes. Therefore, they judged that the one who commits a major sin has no īmān left. And the Murji'ah and the Jahmiyyah said: Īmān is only one indivisible thing—either just the heart's affirmation, as the Jahmiyyah say, or affirmation of the heart and tongue, as the Murji'ah say. They said: If we include actions in īmān, it becomes composite, and if a part of it is lost, then part of īmān is lost, necessitating the removal of the sinner from īmān. And that is the saying of the Muʿtazilah and Khawārij . But actions may have implications and indications."[114]

Shaykh ʿAbd al-Laṭīf ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Ḥasan said: "It has already been stated repeatedly that the objector has a substantial share in the craft of distortion and manipulation, just as Allah described the Jews with that in more than one verse. The research of Shaykh Taqī al-Dīn Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allah have mercy on him, is well-known and available, for he spoke on the issue of takfīr for some sins, as is the view of the Khawārij . But there is nothing in the words of our Shaykh—may Allah have mercy on him—that pertains to this (i.e., takfīr for sins), such that it would need to be refuted by the words of Shaykh al-Islām. Rather, his speech is about tawḥīd, which is the testimony that lā ilāha illa Allāh, and no Muslim disputes that it must be with the heart. If one does not affirm, know, and prefer what lā ilāha illa Allāh indicates, and does not act with the heart-specific actions such as love, turning (to Allah), contentment, reliance, fear, hope, and awe—if none of this occurs in him at all, then he is a Munāfiq.

And verbal acknowledgment is also necessary: if one does not affirm with the tongue, he is a kāfir upon whom the rulings of the disbelievers apply without dispute. Likewise, bodily action is required: one is not a Muslim unless he abandons the worship of ṭāghūt, distances himself from it, and acts for Allah in accordance with the testimony of ikhlāṣ—by submitting his face to Him, avoiding shirk in word and deed, and refraining from bowing, prostrating, sacrificing, or vowing to other than Allah, and by making the dīn purely for Allah in all of this.

This is what our Shaykh indicated in Kashf al-Shubuhāt, and it is agreed upon by the people of knowledge. So if one of these three pillars is compromised, then Islām is compromised and nullified, as is indicated in the ḥadīth of Jibrīl when he asked the Prophet about Islām, īmān, and iḥsān. He began the definition of Islām with the two testimonies, and there is no doubt that knowledge, speech, and action are required for their valid performance. This is not hidden from anyone who has smelled the scent of knowledge. The only disagreement with the Khawārij is regarding what is less than this—such as a servant wronging himself or wronging others."[115]

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[114] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/510)
[115] Miṣbāḥ al-Ẓalām (p. 590)

Shaykh Ḥāfiẓ Ḥakamī, may Allah have mercy on him, said: "The difference between this and the view of the righteous Salaf is that the Salaf did not make all actions a condition for validity (of īmān), but they made many of them a condition for perfection. As ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz said regarding it: 'Whoever completes them has completed īmān, and whoever does not complete them has not completed īmān.'"[116]

[116] Maʿārij al-Qabūl (2/602)

Invalidity of argument used by the Murji'ah who claim to disavow irjā' by merely claiming: "īmān is speech and action, and it increases and decreases"

Some of the Murji'ah in our time attempt to remove themselves from irjā' by simply quoting some of the Imāms of the Sunnah, such as:

From Ismāʿīl ibn Saʿīd: I asked Aḥmad about someone who says: "Īmān increases and decreases." He said: "This person is free from Irjā'."[117]

Al-Barbahārī said: "Whoever says: 'Īmān is statement and action, it increases and decreases,' has left Irjā'—entirely, from beginning to end."[118]

So the Murji'ī says: "I say that Īmān is statement and action, and that it increases and decreases—therefore, I am free from the doctrine of the Murji'ah."

This comes from ignorance, and clinging onto ambiguous statements. The statement only applies to those who affirm the wording and reality, not those who contradict them in meaning. One may say "īmān is action and speech" but contradict themselves by claiming "it is a condition of perfection of īmān, a branch of it and īmān is valid without it".

The Murji'ah of today have followed the Ashāʿirah, who outwardly agree but inwardly agree with the Jahmiyyah.

An Ashʿarī might speak about the attributes of Allah in such a way that gives the impression that he affirms them—saying, for example: "The Qur'ān is the speech of Allah," or "He is above His creation, established on His Throne," or "He will be seen on the Day of Judgment," and so on.

Yet, when you examine their interpretations, their true beliefs become clear: The Qur'ān, to them, is a mere expression or metaphor for the speech of Allah—not literal, not composed of letters or sounds. "Highness" means, to them, dominance and power—not elevation in place. "Istiwā'" (establishment) means "taking control." "Seeing Allah" is interpreted as knowledge—not an actual vision, and without direct encounter.

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[117] al-Sunnah by al-Khallāl (993)
[118] Sharḥ al-Sunnah by (172)

Thus, it becomes clear they are Jahmiyyah in essence, even if their wording resembles that of Ahl al-Sunnah. Similarly the Murji'ah of today follow them in this same manner. To them actions are a condition of perfection, if it is present, īmān is complete, if it is absent then īmān is still present, the person is still a Muslim, from the people of intercession and will be admitted with the prophets and righteous people even if he never performed a single good deed.

There is no real difference between today's Murji'ah and their predecessors. They are united in the belief that someone who abandons action entirely—despite having the ability to act—does not disbelieve, remains eligible for intercession, and will ultimately enter Paradise. The only difference lies in their terminology: the early Murji'ah, whom the Salaf unanimously condemned and declared misguided, said: "Īmān is only statement and belief," excluding action from imān. Yet they still ruled that one who abandoned action would enter Paradise. **The Murji'ah of today consider the one who abandons all action will still enter jannah, as action is only a condition of perfection of īmān.**

If you ask them: "What is the action that you claim is part of Īmān?" They say: "Honoring one's parents is action, wiping over the head of an orphan is action, smiling at your brother is action—these are many deeds we perform, so we have fulfilled the action by which our imān is valid!"

This is a form of deception they use against the common people and those unaware of the true nature of their doctrine. The Murji'ah of today are like Shabābah ibn Sawwār, who used to hide his Irjā' regarding Īmān, claiming: "Īmān is statement and action." But when asked: "What do you consider action to be?" He would reply: "When I say 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh,' I have acted with my tongue—this is the action." When Imām Aḥmad heard about his statement and doctrine, he exposed him, warned against him, and deemed his view among the most evil of the Murji'ah's doctrines.

Al-Khallāl narrated from Abū Bakr al-Athram, who said: I heard Abū ʿAbd Allāh (Imām Aḥmad), and he was asked about Shabābah: "What do you say about him?" He replied: "Shabābah used to call to Irjā'. It has been reported from him a saying more vile than all other statements I've heard—he said: 'If a person speaks, then he has acted.' He claimed: 'Īmān is speech and action, as they say. So, when he speaks, he has acted with a limb—his tongue.'" Then Abū ʿAbd Allāh said: "This is an evil statement. I've never heard anyone say it, nor has it reached me from anyone else."[119] al-Khallāl has a whole chapter in His Sunnah regarding this.

[119] al-Sunnah by al-Khallāl (966)

Ibn Rajab said: "A group of Murji'ah used to say: Īmān is speech and action—in agreement with the People of Ḥadīth—but they would interpret 'action' as 'speech' and say: 'It is the action of the tongue.'"[120]

As Ibn Taymiyyah said: "The later ones who upheld Jahm's view regarding Īmān display the language of the Salaf in this matter—in their use of exceptions, and in affirming the absence of imān in the heart where the Qur'ān has denied it, and so on. But all of this is only a verbal agreement with the Salaf, while their actual doctrine is utterly opposed to the Salaf. There is no view further from the Salaf's position than theirs."[121]

Upon them fits perfectly the statement of that Isḥāq ibn Rāhūyah: "Then the Murji'ah went to extremes until it became their position that a group says: 'Whoever abandons the obligatory prayers, fasting in Ramadan, paying zakāh, making ḥajj, and most obligations—without denying them—is not a disbeliever. His matter is deferred to Allah, as long as he affirms them.' These are the Murji'ah about whom there is no doubt."[122]

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[120] Fatḥ al-Bārī by Ibn Rajab (1/122)
[121] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/158)
[122] al-Sunnah by Ḥarb, [189]

The Murji'ah use the narration that "Whoever says 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh' will enter Jannah" to argue actions are not essential to īmān

They claim: The Prophet ﷺ restricted salvation and entry into Paradise to this statement alone without mentioning action. Therefore, saying the shahādah is the core of imān, and a person will be saved from eternal Hell merely by uttering this word—even if he never acts upon it!

Ibn Taymiyyah pointed out that the Murji'ah often base their arguments on general texts such as the hadith: "Whoever testifies that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is His Messenger... Allah will enter him into Paradise"—and other similar narrations."[123]

But the scholars of Sunnah and hadith have clarified and refuted this misconception. Among their responses: These hadiths were stated in the early days of Islam—before the obligations and boundaries of the Sharīʿah were revealed.

Imām al-Zuhrī (may Allah have mercy on him) narrated: Hishām ibn ʿAbd al-Malik said: "Did it reach you that the Prophet ﷺ ordered a caller to proclaim, 'Whoever says Lā ilāha illa Allāh shall enter Paradise'?" I said: "Yes, but that was before the obligations were revealed. After that, Allah made obligations upon the people, and they must act upon what Allah has obligated upon them."[124]

Sallamah ibn Nubayṭ said: We mentioned in the presence of al-Ḍaḥḥāk ibn Muzāḥim the hadith: 'Whoever says Lā ilāha illa Allāh shall enter Paradise.' He said: "That was before the boundaries were set and the obligations revealed."[125]

al-Ḍaḥḥāk also said (narrated by Naṣīr Abū al-Aswad): "Your foolish companions say: 'Whoever says Lā ilāha illa Allāh enters Paradise.' But that was only before the obligations were revealed."[126]

Abū al-Ḥārith said: I asked Imām Ahmed ibn Ḥanbal: "If a man says Lā ilāha illa Allāh, is he a believer?" He replied: "That was the beginning of imān. Then came the obligations: prayer, zakāh, fasting in Ramaḍān, and ḥajj to the House (Kaʿbah)."[127]

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[123] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/614)
[124] al-Īmān by Aḥmad, no. 75; al-Sharīʿah, 374; al-Ibānah al-Kubrā, 1339
[125] al-Īmān by Aḥmad, no. 79; al-Sharīʿah, 370; al-Ibānah al-Kubrā, 1258
[126] al-Kunā wa al-Asmā' by al-Dūlābī, no. 589
[127] al-Sunnah by al-Khallāl, no. 939

Al-Ājurrī response to the Murji'ah who try use the athar of "Whoever says: Lā ilāha illa Allāh will enter Paradise" while denying actions (and some deny belief). He said: "If someone argues using the hadiths that state: "Whoever says: Lā ilāha illa Allāh will enter Paradise," it is said to them: These statements were made before the obligations (of worship) were revealed (I.e. Makkan Period), as we have previously mentioned. This is the view of the scholars of Islam, those whom Allah benefited with knowledge and who were leaders to be followed—except for the Murji'ah, who deviated from the consensus of what the Companions and those who followed them in righteousness held, and from the views of the Imāms who are trusted and respected in every land."[128]

Ibn Battāh said: Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Raqī narrated to us, saying: al-Ḥusayn – meaning: Abū al-Malīḥ – narrated from al-Zuhrī, who said: Hishām said to me: "Has it reached you that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ commanded a caller to proclaim: 'Whoever says: Lā ilāha illā Allāh will enter Paradise'?" I said: "Yes – and that was before the obligations were revealed. Then the obligations were revealed, so it is necessary for the people to act upon what Allah has made obligatory upon them." and Salamah ibn Nubayṭ narrated from al-Ḍaḥḥāk ibn Muzāḥim, who said: It was mentioned in his presence: "Whoever says: Lā ilāha illā Allāh will enter Paradise." So al-Ḍaḥḥāk said: "That was before the legal limits were established and the obligations were revealed."[129]

al-Khallāl reported: Muḥammad ibn Abī Hārūn and Muḥammad ibn Jaʿfar informed me that Abū al-Ḥārith narrated to them. He said: I asked Abū ʿAbd Allāh Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, "If a man says: Lā ilāha illā Allāh, is he a believer?" He replied: "That was how īmān began. Then the obligations were revealed — prayer, zakāh, fasting in Ramaḍān, and pilgrimage to the House."[130]

Yaḥyā ibn Abī al-Khayr al-ʿImrānī said:

The Murji'ah and those who say that imān is merely a statement by the tongue and belief in the heart without deeds use as evidence the well-known reports from the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, such as: "Whoever's last words are 'There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah' will enter Paradise." And also what was narrated by ʿUbādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit that the Prophet ﷺ said: "Whoever testifies that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, the Fire will be forbidden for him."

The response to these reports comes from two angles:

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[128] Kitāb Ash-Sharīʿah 1/265-266
[129] Al-Ibānah al-Kubrā by Imām Ibn Battāh 1/712-713
[130] al-Sunnah by Imām al-Khallāl 1/481

First: As az-Zuhrī said, “These reports were before the descent of the obligations and commands and prohibitions.”

Second: These reports speak about the final outcome of the monotheists — that Allah will eventually admit them into Paradise, even if He punishes them first for their sins. They will not remain in the Fire forever, contrary to the claim of the Khawārij, Muʿtazilah, and Qadariyyah.

Allah has clearly informed in the Qur’an that He admits the servants into Paradise through imān and righteous deeds, in many verses, such as: “Give glad tidings to those who believe and do righteous deeds, that for them are gardens beneath which rivers flow.” [al-Baqarah 2:25] “Indeed, those who believe and do righteous deeds and establish prayer and give zakah – their reward is with their Lord.” [al-Baqarah 2:277] “As for those who believe and do righteous deeds, He will fully reward them.” [Āl ʿImrān 3:57] “And those who believe and do righteous deeds – We will admit them into gardens beneath which rivers flow, abiding therein forever.” [an-Nisāʾ 4:57] “He will fully reward them and increase them out of His bounty.” [al-Ḥadīd 57:27] “Allah has promised those who believe and do righteous deeds forgiveness and a great reward.” [al-Māʾidah 5:9] “We do not send the messengers except as bringers of good news and warners. So whoever believes and reforms – they will have no fear, nor will they grieve.” [al-Anʿām 6:48] “Those who believe and do righteous deeds – We do not burden a soul beyond its capacity – they are the companions of Paradise... It will be called out to them: That is Paradise, which you have inherited for what you used to do.” [al-Aʿrāf 7:42–43] “Indeed, man is in loss, except those who believe and do righteous deeds, and enjoin one another to truth and enjoin one another to patience.” [al-ʿAṣr 103:1–3]

In all these verses, there is no mention of Paradise being attained without action. Allah has informed that He forgives whom He wills and punishes whom He wills, but He does not forgive shirk. The Qur’an does not contradict itself; rather, parts of it affirm and explain others.

It was narrated that a man asked Abū Dharr about imān, and he recited: “Righteousness is not that you turn your faces to the east or the west...” [al-Baqarah 2:177], and said: “A man asked the Prophet ﷺ about imān, and he recited this verse to him.”

It was narrated from ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet ﷺ said: “imān is a statement by the tongue, actions by the limbs, and conviction in the heart.” And in another version from him: “imān is a spoken word, an enacted deed, and comprehension by the intellect — it increases with obedience and decreases with disobedience.”

It was also narrated from both ʿAlī and Ibn Masʿūd, may Allah be pleased with them: "A statement is not valid without action, nor is action valid without statement, and neither statement nor action are valid without intention, and intention is not valid unless it conforms to the Sunnah."

Similar sayings were also reported from al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Sufyān ath-Thawrī, Ibn Jurayj, Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAmr ibn ʿUthmān, Mālik ibn Anas, al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ, Wakīʿ, ash-Shāfiʿī, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, al-Walīd, Abū Bakr ibn ʿAyyāsh, and ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-Mubārak. These are the Imāms whose mention brings no unease and whose knowledge is widely accepted.

Wakīʿ said: "The people of Sunnah and the community say: imān is both statement and action." While the Murji'ah say: "imān is statement," And the Jahmiyyah say: "imān is knowledge." And even if there were no other evidence but the verse: "And they were not commanded except to worship Allah, being sincere to Him in religion, inclining to truth, and to establish prayer and give zakah, and that is the correct religion." [al-Bayyinah 98:5] That would be sufficient as proof, as it clearly shows that imān is not complete without sincerity and action."[131]

From al-Hasan ibn ʿUmayrah: It was said to al-Hasan al-Baṣrī, "There are people who say: 'Whoever says lā ilāha illa Allāh will enter Paradise.'" He replied: "Whoever says lā ilāha illa Allāh and fulfills its rights and obligations will enter Paradise."[132]

From Muḥammad ibn Saʿīd ibn Rummānah, from his father: It was said to Wahb ibn Munabbih, "Is not lā ilāha illa Allāh the key to Paradise?" He said: "Yes. But there is no key except that it has teeth. If one comes with it having its teeth, it will open; otherwise, it will not open."[133]

Al-Ḥāfiẓ ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Maqdisī (d. 600 AH) was asked about the ḥadīth: "Whoever says lā ilāha illa Allāh will enter Paradise"—whether it was abrogated. He replied: "Rather, it is sound and firmly established. But additional conditions were added to it, and obligations were imposed upon His servants."[134] He mentioned the statement of al-Zuhrī regarding this.

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[131] al-Intiṣār fī al-Radd ʿala al-Muʿtazilah wa al-Qadariyyah al-Ashrār 3/757
[132] Al-Ḥujjah fī Bayān al-Maḥajjah (540)
[133] Al-Ḥujjah fī Bayān al-Maḥajjah (541)
[134] Dhail al-Ṭabaqāt (3/50)

The Murji'ah use the narration of Intercession to reject actions from īmān

Many contemporaries rely on this to argue for complete removal of action from īmān. Among the most frequently cited is the Prophet's saying: "They did not do any good at all." They claim this phrase clearly indicates that whoever says lā ilāha illa Allāh will enter Paradise even if he did not perform a single righteous deed.

This line of argument is inherited from their early predecessors among the Murji'ah and others. They have brought nothing new. These hadiths may indeed seem to support the view of the Murji'ah or the Jahmiyyah, who excluded deeds from the definition of imān entirely. They argue that such hadiths clearly support their view—that anyone who has even the smallest trace of imān in his heart will be saved from eternal damnation in Hell, even if he never performed a single good deed in his life despite being capable of doing so.

Because of this, you will not find the Imāms of the Sunnah or the scholars of hadith who wrote on the subject of imān and refuted the Murji'ah, using the hadiths of intercession to argue against the position of the Murji'ah regarding the status of deeds in īmān.

As for the Murji'ah of our time, due to their lack of understanding, and their inconsistencies in matters of īmān, they use these numerous narrations to argue against those who uphold deeds as an essential part of īmān and believe that a person's īmān is invalid without them.

They returned to distortion and ambiguity—similar to the behavior of Shabībah ibn Sawwār, the Murji'ī, who outwardly agreed with Ahl al-Sunnah by saying: "Īmān is speech and action," but then clarified his true view, saying: "Whoever speaks (the testimony), has already acted." Thus, he returned to the same belief as the Murji'ah by excluding action from īmān—and for this, the scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah criticized him, as has already been mentioned.

So this man is the model for those who, in outward appearance, agree with Ahl al-Sunnah by saying: "īmān is statement and action." But when asked about the status of actions, they say: "It is part of the perfection of īmān and one of its branches—īmān is valid without it." They claim a person can be saved from eternal Hellfire with only the testimony—even if he never performed any good deed whatsoever.

This clearly shows that they align with all branches of the Murji'ah in removing deeds from the essence of īmān, and that the disagreement between them and other Murji'ah is merely verbal and superficial, not real, and they use the hadith of intercession as proof of what they claim.

The Imāms of the Sunnah confronted the doubt raised by the Murji'ah, refuting and invalidating it. They clarified the meaning and context of these hadiths—namely, that they are to be understood according to the usage of the Arabic language, where negation refers to a lack of perfection and completeness, not a complete absence of action.

Abū ʿUbayd al-Qāsim ibn Sallām (raḥimahu Allāh) said in al-Īmān (p. 108): "If someone says: How can it be said, he is not a believer, while the name of īmān still applies to him? It is answered: This is well-known and widely used in the Arabic language. They frequently negate an action from its doer when it is done improperly or without perfection. Don't you see how they say about a craftsman whose work lacks quality: you didn't make anything, oryou didn't do anything? What they mean here is not a literal denial of the action itself, but a denial of its perfection. The doer is considered to have acted in name, but not in excellence. They even apply this usage to more serious things. For example, when a man mistreats his father, they say: he is not a son, even though they know he is his son by lineage."[135]

Ibn Khuzaymah said: "This phrase—lam yaʿmal khayran qaṭṭ (he never did any good)—is of the kind that the Arabs use when they negate a name due to a lack of perfection and completeness. So the meaning, based on this principle, is: 'he did not do any good' in terms of completeness and perfection, not in terms of what was required of him and obligated."[136]

This phrase appears in many aḥādīth, and none of those who understand the Arabic language have taken it to mean a total denial of action. Among them:

From Abū Hurayrah (raḍiya Allāhu ʿanhu): The Messenger of Allah entered the mosque, and a man entered and prayed, then greeted the Prophet with salām. The Prophet replied and said: "Go back and pray, for you have not prayed." The man repeated his prayer and returned, and the Prophet said again: "Go back and pray, for you have not prayed"—three times. The man then said: "By the One Who sent you with the truth, I do not know any better than this—teach me."[137] In this ḥadīth, the Prophet emphasized by saying "innaka" (you), but he did not mean the man literally hadn't prayed. **Rather, he meant the prayer was not complete or valid.**

It is not hidden that the narrators of this chapter are the Companions (ṣaḥābahh) of the Prophet, and that the Imams of the Salaf are the men of its chains of transmission (asānīd). Despite this, they did not understand from these ḥadīths what the Murji'ah understood—**namely, the removal of actions and entering Paradise without them.**

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[135] al-Īmān by Abū ʿUbayd al-Qāsim ibn Sallām (108)
[136] Kitāb al-Tawḥīd (2/729)
[137] Bukhārī 757

They read the ḥadīths of intercession (shafāʿah), narrated them in their books and compilations, and used them as arguments against the Khawārij, the Muʿtazilah, and the Murji'ah in the chapters on īmān.

The Murji'ah of our time have excessively repeated these aḥādīth and argued that they are "conclusive evidence" in this issue, and "a text decisively resolving the point of dispute," and that they should put an end to the disagreement over the essential nature of actions.

But these attempts are, in reality, nothing more than a defense of the early Murji'ah's doctrine and a rebuttal of the ṣaḥābahh of the Prophet ﷺ, who unanimously agreed on the takfīr of the one who abandons ṣalāh, stating that the one who abandons the prayer has no share in Islam.

One of the strangest things you will find among the sayings of these Murji'ah is that they accuse those who hold the view that action is essential and who follow the ṣaḥābahh in declaring the abandoner of prayer to be a disbeliever, of not believing in the ḥadīths of intercession and not giving them any weight—an accusation openly made by more than one of them.

What is intended here is that the ḥadīths of intercession, which the Murji'ah have made so much noise about, provide no real evidence for their position—except by twisting the texts, forcing interpretations, and rejecting the rest of the revealed proofs.

Among their statements regarding this issue is the following:

The ḥadīths of intercession are general (ʿāmm) in wording, but they are specified (makhṣūṣah) by other evidences—such as those that declare the one who abandons prayer to be a disbeliever.

Ibn Khuzaymah said: "Chapter: Clarifying that all the reports previously mentioned up to this point regarding the Prophet's intercession in taking people of tawḥīd out of the Fire are general in wording, but intended to refer to something specific (khāṣṣ). If a Murji' objects to this harmonization and says: "It is impossible that someone who performed prayer could be described as 'he never did any good at all'," then he is answered: How, then, can it be said of one who uttered the word of tawḥīd, believed in it with sincerity=, certainty=, truthfulness, and submission, that he "never did any good at all"?"[138]

the ḥadīths of intercession (aḥādīth al-shafāʿah) are from the category of ambiguous texts (mutashābih) that must necessarily be referred back to the clear and decisive texts (muḥkam) and to the consensus (ijmāʿ) of the Companions (ṣaḥābahh) and the Salaf of this Ummah.

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[138] Kitāb al-Tawḥīd by Ibn Khuzaymah (2/728)

Another important matter is that it cannot be conceded to them (i.e., the Murji'ah) what they claim—that the ḥadīths of intercession are clear in their indication that action is completely excluded, or that they decisively resolve the dispute in this grave matter.

For indeed, in some versions of these aḥādīth, it is mentioned that the last person to come out of the Hellfire and enter Paradise is a man whom the fire consumed—except for the places of prostration, by which the angels recognize him and thus remove him from it.

Al-Bukhārī and Muslim narrated from Abū Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "...When Allah has finished judging between the servants and wants to bring out by His mercy those He wills from the people of the Fire, He will command the angels to remove from the Fire whoever did not associate anything with Allah—those whom Allah wills to show mercy to—those who testified "lā ilāha illā Allāh". They will recognize them in the Fire by the marks of prostration. The Fire consumes the body of the son of Ādam except for the marks of prostration. Allah has forbidden the Fire to consume the marks of prostration. They will be taken out of the Fire, scorched, and then the Water of Life will be poured over them, and they will grow beneath it like a seed grows by the side of a stream. Then Allah will complete the judgment among the servants, and there will remain a man facing the Fire—he is the last of the people of the Fire to enter Paradise..."

This ḥadīth is a clear indication that the last person to enter Paradise from Hell will be recognized by the angels through the marks of prayer and prostration, which the fire did not consume.

<u>This invalidates the claim that these ḥadīths indicate the total absence of action.</u>

The action by which a servants īmān is valid is the prayer

The ijmāʿ of Ahlus sunnah and hadith are that īmān cannot exist without actions.the followers of the sunnah whenever differences arises, they return back to the foundation of the religion, which is what the prophet ﷺ and the ṣaḥābah were upon.

Ibn Taymiyyah said: "Whoever wants to know the religion of al-Islām must examine the prophetic texts, know what the ṣaḥābahh and tābiʿūn did, and what the imāms of the Muslims said—so that he may distinguish the matters of consensus from those that are disputed."[139]

The texts of the Qurʾān and Sunnah are explicit in the takfīr of the one who abandons ṣalāh. And upon this was the consensus of the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ and those who followed them with excellence. The Murji'ah sought to undermine and nullify this.

Even some "Salafis" use statements from the Jahmiyyah, Ashāʿirah and their likes to refute the consensus. Some of them claim "the majority" went against it. It is known however no one's view can contradict the ijmāʿ affirmed by the ṣaḥābah. It is impermissible for anyone to oppose the ijmāʿ of the ṣaḥābah, their opinion is not considered.

The Imāms of Sunnah and Ḥadīth considered opposing the ijmāʿ of the Companions to be a bidʿah and destructive, and a cause for discrediting the one who does so.

Al-Awzāʿī said: "I advise you with one thing—for it will clear your doubt and bring you to the straight path by Allāh's permission: Look to what the Companions of the Messenger of Allāh ṣallā Allāhu ʿalayhi wa-sallam were upon. If they were united upon something and none of them differed in it—then where is the room for another opinion?!
Indeed, destruction lies in differing from them. They never united on something except that guidance lay in it."[140]

He also said: "What opinion could a man have about a matter that has reached him from the Messenger of Allāh ṣallā Allāhu ʿalayhi wa-sallam, other than to follow it?
Even if there is no direct statement from the Prophet on an issue, but the ṣaḥābah after him spoke on it—they are more deserving of being followed than us, for Allāh praised those who follow them in His saying: 'And those who follow them with excellence...' (al-Tawbah, 100). But you say: No, we will compare it to our own interpretation of the Qurʾān. What matches, we

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[139] al-Akhnaʾiyyah p. 185
[140] al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (1876)

accept; and what doesn't, we reject. That is the end of every innovator in al-Islām—rejecting whatever from the sunnah contradicts his own opinion."[141]

Al-Awzāʿī narrated from Ibn al-Musayyib that he was asked about a certain matter, and he said: "The Companions of the Messenger of Allah differed on it, and I have no opinion alongside theirs." Ibn Waḍḍāḥ said: "This is the truth." Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr explained: "Its meaning is that it is not permissible for him to express an opinion that contradicts all of them."[142]

Imām Aḥmad, in the narration of ʿAbdullāh and Abū al-Ḥārith regarding the Companions, said: "If they differed, one must not go beyond their sayings. What if they unanimously agreed—can one then depart from their views?" He replied: "That is an evil statement, the statement of the people of innovation. It is not permissible to go beyond the statements of the Companions, even if they differed."[143]

Imām Aḥmad said: "The obligation upon people is to follow the narrations from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, to distinguish what is authentic from what is weak, and then to follow the statements of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ so long as their statements do not contradict one another. If they differ, then one refers to the Book of Allah, and whichever of their sayings is closest to the Book is taken. Or, if it is closer to the saying of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, that is taken. If nothing is found from the Prophet ﷺ or the Companions, then one looks to the sayings of the Tābiʿīn. Whichever is closest to the Book and the Sunnah is followed, and anything innovated after them is to be abandoned."[144]

Isḥāq said: "As for the scholar who gives a fatwa that contradicts what came from the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ or the Tābiʿīn who followed them in righteousness, due to ignorance of the knowledge that reached them—then it is obligatory upon the students to abandon that particular statement of the scholar. His error should not be used as an excuse, even if he is more knowledgeable in other areas, because the Prophet ﷺ said: 'Indeed, among what I fear most for my nation is the slip of a scholar.' And he explained the solution: 'If the scholar slips, do not follow his slip.' This confirms what we have explained."[145]

Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr said: "The consensus of the Companions is a firmly established proof and sound knowledge. If that consensus is based on direct transmission, then it is among the strongest forms of Sunnah. And if it is based on ijtihād with no known opposition among

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[141] Dhamm al-Kalām (925)
[142] Jāmiʿ Bayān al-ʿIlm wa Faḍlihi (1423)
[143] al-ʿUdda fī Uṣūl al-Fiqh 4/1059
[144] Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah 2/15, Badāʾiʿ al-Fawāʾid 5/1428
[145] Masāʾil al-Kawsaj (3536)

them, it is still binding knowledge and proof. Allah said: ‘And whoever opposes the way of the believers – We will turn him to what he has turned to and roast him in Hell – and what an evil destination.’ [al-Nisāʾ: 115]”[146]

The ijmāʿ on the disbelief of abandoning prayer by the ṣaḥābah is based on direct transmission.

Al-Haytham ibn Jamīl said: I said to Mālik ibn Anas: “O Abū ʿAbdillāh, among us are people who compile books wherein one of them says: ‘So-and-so narrated from so-and-so, from ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb such-and-such.’ And so-and-so from Ibrāhīm [al-Nakhaʿī] such-and-such — and they take the statement of Ibrāhīm.” Mālik said: “Has the report from ʿUmar been authenticated with them?!” I said: “It is simply a narration, just like the narration from Ibrāhīm is authenticated with them.” Mālik replied: “Such people must be asked to repent.”[147]

If one is asked to repent merely for abandoning the statement of ʿUmar — may Allah be pleased with him — and adopting the statement of Ibrāhīm al-Nakhaʿī — may Allah have mercy on him — then how much more so for one who opposes the consensus of the Companions and follows someone not even of the rank of Ibrāhīm?

The imāms of the sunnah stated, the statement which one enters the religion is the utterance of the shahada and the action is the prayer.

Ibn Baṭṭah — may Allah have mercy on him — said in al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (no. 1157): “Establishing the prayer is [the essence of] ‘action.’ It is the religion with which the messengers were sent and which the believers were commanded to uphold... Allah said: ‘Turning to Him in repentance, and fear Him, and establish the prayer, and do not be among the polytheists’ [al-Rūm: 31]. So Allah made the one who abandons the prayer a polytheist, outside the bounds of faith...”

Ibn Taymiyyah — may Allah have mercy on him — said in Sharḥ al-ʿUmda (2/81): “Indeed, faith (īmān) according to Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamāʿah is: speech and action — as the Qurʾān and Sunnah indicate, and as the Salaf unanimously agreed upon... Speech is the affirmation of the Messenger, and action is the affirmation of that speech. So if a person is entirely devoid of action, he is not a believer. And the specific statement that renders one a believer is: the two testimonies (shahādatān); likewise, the specific action is the prayer.”

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[146] al-ʿTamhīd (4/267)
[147] Iʿlām al-Muwaqqiʿīn, 2/140)

Ibn al-Qayyim — may Allah have mercy on him — said in al-Ṣalāh (p. 103): "What remains to be examined is whether the prayer is a condition for the validity of faith — and this is the core of the matter. The evidences we have mentioned, and others, indicate that no action from a person is accepted unless the prayer is performed. It is the key to his record and the capital upon which his profit is based. It is inconceivable to retain profit without capital. If he loses the capital, he loses all his profit — even if he performs the prayer outwardly [but not truly]. This is what is meant by the statement: 'Whoever neglects it, then for all else he is more neglectful.' And in the hadith: 'The first thing to be accounted for among his deeds is the prayer; if it is sound, the rest of his deeds will be examined; if it is not, then none of his deeds will be considered.'"

Al-Athram — may Allah have mercy on him — said: It was said to Abū ʿAbdillāh Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal: "Is the one who abandons the fast of Ramadan like the one who abandons the prayer?"

He replied: "The prayer is more emphatic — it is not like the others."

He was then asked: "And what about the one who abandons zakāh?"

He said: "It has been reported from ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd: 'The one who abandons zakāh is not a Muslim.' And Abū Bakr fought over it. But the hadiths [explicitly addressing this] pertain to the prayer."[148]

Ibn Baṭṭah — may Allah have mercy on him — said in al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (no. 1157): "Establishing the prayer is [the essence of] 'action.' It is the religion with which the messengers were sent and which the believers were commanded to uphold... Allah said: 'Turning to Him in repentance, and fear Him, and establish the prayer, and do not be among the polytheists' [al-Rūm: 31]. So Allah made the one who abandons the prayer a polytheist, outside the bounds of faith..."

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[148] al-Riwāyatayn wa al-Wajhayn, 1/221; Aḥkām Ahl al-Milal, no. 1406

[149] Sharḥ al-ʿUmda 2/81

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Muḥammad ibn Naṣr al-Marwazī said: “Indeed, Allah — Blessed and Exalted — has severely warned against abandoning it, and He affirmed this on the tongue of His Prophet — peace and blessings be upon him — by removing the one who abandons it from faith due to that abandonment. He did not make any other obligation from among the deeds of the servants a distinguishing line between belief and disbelief except for the prayer. He said: ‘There is nothing between a servant and disbelief or faith except leaving the prayer.’ Thus, He informed us that it is the foundation of tawḥīd (monotheism), and He declared disbelief for abandoning it just as He declared disbelief for abandoning tawḥīd. Then He expelled from faith those with whom He had taken a covenant from among all the servants to uphold faith, saying: ‘The covenant that is between us and them is the prayer; whoever abandons it has disbelieved’ … and so on.”[152]

Ibn Taymiyyah said: “Whoever claims that obligatory faith can be attained without performing any of the obligatory acts has made a clear and manifest error… and the prayer is the greatest, most comprehensive, foremost, and most noble of them all.”[153]

Specifying the prayer as the particular action which one enters into islam is based upon numerous evidence from Qur’ān and sunnah and ijmāʿ of the ṣaḥābah, the Murjiʾah try to nullify this to undermine the role of action in īmān.

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[150] al-Ṣalāh p. 103
[151] al-Riwāyatayn wa al-Wajhayn, 1/221; Aḥkām Ahl al-Milal (1406)
[152] Taʿẓīm Qadr al-Ṣalāh 1/132
[153] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/621)

They strive and transmit disagreements from those who came after, concerning whether one who abandons due to laziness and headlessness is to be declared a disbeliever. They know that the position of not declaring such a person a disbeliever necessarily leads to rejection of takfir for abandoning other pillars and obligations. Those who did not declare takfir upon this matter, refrained those who abandoned other pillars such as fasting etc, the concept of takfir for abandoning actions is gone and thus the belief of kufr from action is ultimately removed from the definition of īmān. They affirm belief for one who abandons all actions such as prayer etc. (and the extreme of them excuse and affirm islam for those who do shirk) as long as they utter the shahada.

Why Ahl As-Sunnah included the issue of abandoning prayer in their books

The early generation included this issue of takfir of the one who abandons prayer under the subjects of tawhid, īmān and Islam. They considered this a matter of creed and not fiqh – unlike the jurist who either fell into irjā' or were influenced by it. Some examples are:

Abū Dāwūd (d. 275 AH) stated in his Sunan: "Chapter on Refuting Irjā'," in which he included the ḥadīth of Jābir — may Allah be pleased with him — in which the Prophet ﷺ said: "Between a servant and disbelief is the abandonment of prayer."[154]

Al-Tirmidhī (d. 279 AH) mentioned in his Sunan under "Chapters on Faith – What Has Come Regarding Abandoning Prayer," several narrations regarding takfīr of the one who abandons prayer. He also transmitted the statement of ʿAbd Allāh ibn Shaqīq al-ʿUqaylī: "The companions of Muḥammad ﷺ did not regard the abandonment of any act as disbelief, except for prayer."[155]

ʿAbd Allāh ibn Aḥmad (d. 290 AH) placed this issue under the chapter "On Faith and Refuting the Murji'ah," and included under it the aḥādīth and reports concerning the disbelief of the one who abandons prayer.[156]

Abū ʿAwānah (d. 316 AH) titled a chapter in his book: "Clarification of the Best of Deeds, and the Evidence That Īmān is Statement and Action, and That Whoever Abandons Prayer Has Disbelieved, and the Evidence That Prayer is the Highest of Deeds, Since Abandoning It Renders a Person a Disbeliever."[157]

Al-Ājurrī (d. 360 AH) mentioned in al-Sharīʿah: "Mention of the Disbelief of the One Who Abandons Prayer."[158]

Ibn Baṭṭah (d. 387 AH): "The Disbelief of the One Who Abandons Prayer and Withholds Zakāh, and the Permissibility of Fighting and Killing Them if They Do So."[159]

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[154] al-Sunan by Abū Dāwūd (4/219)
[155] al-Sunan by Al-Tirmidhī (5/13)
[156] al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh ibn Aḥmad (p. 273)
[157] Mustakhraj on Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim
[158] al-Sharīʿah, in the "Book of Īmān and Refuting the Murji'ah," chapter (26)
[159] Kitāb al-Īmān wa al-Radd ʿalā al-Murji'ah, chapter (21)

Al-Lālikāʾī (d. 418 AH): "A Compilation of What Has Been Narrated from the Prophet ﷺ That Prayer Is Part of Īmān." He transmitted this from the Companions: ʿUmar, ʿAlī, ʿAbd Allāh ibn Masʿūd, ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAbbās, Abū al-Dardāʾ, al-Barāʾ, and Jābir ibn ʿAbd Allāh. Jābir was asked: "What act was considered to separate disbelief and faith in your time during the era of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ?" He said: "Prayer." And from al-Ḥasan: "It reached me that the Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to say: 'Between a man and his falling into shirk and kufr is his abandoning prayer without excuse.'" This was also said by the Tābiʿīn: Mujāhid, Saʿīd ibn Jubayr, Jābir ibn Zayd, ʿAmr ibn Dīnār, Ibrāhīm al-Nakhaʿī, and al-Qāsim ibn Mukhaymara. And from the scholars: Mālik, al-Awzāʿī, al-Shāfiʿī, Sharīk ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Nakhaʿī, Aḥmad, Isḥāq, Abū Thawr, and Abū ʿUbayd al-Qāsim ibn Sallām."[160]

Whoever examines their books of creed and the statements they transmitted will find many explicit statements regarding abandoning prayer constitutes disbelief. This was all in refutation of the Murji'ah.

Qutaybah ibn Saʿīd (d. 240 AH), a teacher of Imām al-Bukhārī, said in his creed: "We do not declare anyone a disbeliever because of a sin—except for abandoning the prayer, even if he commits major sins."

Imām Aḥmad (d. 241 AH), in his creed as narrated by ʿAbdūs al-ʿAṭṭār, stated: "There is no deed whose abandonment is disbelief except the prayer. Whoever abandons it is a disbeliever, and Allāh has permitted his killing."

ʿAlī ibn al-Madīnī (d. 243 AH) said in his creed: "Abandoning the prayer is disbelief. There is nothing among deeds whose abandonment constitutes disbelief except the prayer. Whoever abandons it is a disbeliever, and his killing is permissible."

Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā al-Dhuhlī (d. 258 AH) stated in his creed: "Abandoning the prayer is disbelief, based on the well-known narration from the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ in multiple chains: 'Between the servant and disbelief is the abandonment of the prayer.'"

In the Qādirī Creed (d. 441 AH), which was composed in the fifth century and agreed upon by the scholars of the time—being read aloud on pulpits and in large gatherings, with jurists signing off on it—it says: "This is the belief of the Muslims. Whoever opposes it is a sinner and a disbeliever." The creed continues: "A person is not declared a disbeliever for abandoning any of the obligatory duties except the prescribed prayer alone. Whoever abandons it without excuse, while being healthy and unoccupied until the time of the next prayer passes, is a

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[160] Sharḥ Uṣūl Iʿtiqād Ahl al-Sunnah (chapter 54)

disbeliever—even if he does not deny its obligation—based on the saying of the Prophet ﷺ: 'Between the servant and disbelief is the abandonment of prayer.' Whoever abandons it has disbelieved, and he remains a disbeliever until he repents and makes it up. If he dies before repenting and making it up, or if he does not intend to make it up, he is not to be prayed over and will be resurrected alongside Pharaoh, Hāmān, Qārūn, and Ubayy ibn Khalaf. As for other deeds, abandoning them does not constitute disbelief unless accompanied by denial. This is the position of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamāʿah."

The point being made here is that it is not a mere jurisprudence issue rather it is an issue related to creed, directly tied to the subject of īmān and Islam, and these were mentioned heavily in refutation to the Murji'ah.

Ibn al-Qayyim, when discussing the disagreement among the later scholars regarding the takfīr of the one who abandons prayer, in his book As-Ṣalāh, stated in a section titled "The Ruling Between the Two Sides and the Decisive Word Between the Two Groups": "The correct understanding of this issue is based on understanding the true nature of īmān and kufr."

He also said: "There is a foundational principle here: that the reality of faith is composed of both speech and action. Speech is of two types: Speech of the heart, which is belief; Speech of the tongue, which is the verbal declaration of Islām. Action is also of two types: Action of the heart, which includes intention and sincerity; Action of the limbs.

If all four of these are absent, faith is nullified completely. If belief in the heart disappears, the rest of the components are of no benefit—because the belief of the heart is a condition for all other parts to be valid and beneficial. If the action of the heart disappears despite there being belief in its truth—this is the battleground between the Murji'ah and Ahl al-Sunnah.

Ahl al-Sunnah are in agreement that faith ceases to exist in such a case, and that mere belief is of no benefit without the action of the heart, which includes love and submission. This is just as it did not benefit Iblīs, Pharaoh and his people, the Jews, and the polytheists who believed in the truthfulness of the Messenger—indeed, they would admit openly and secretly that he was not a liar—but they did not follow him or believe in him.

Thus, if faith can be nullified by the loss of the heart's action, it is not surprising that it could also be nullified by the abandonment of the greatest bodily act—especially since that indicates a lack of love and submission in the heart, which itself indicates a lack of firm belief, as previously explained. For the absence of the heart's obedience necessitates the absence of bodily obedience. If the heart obeyed and submitted, the limbs would follow. The absence of the heart's obedience

and submission necessitates the absence of belief that requires obedience, which is the reality of faith—for faith is not mere belief, as has been explained, but belief that necessarily leads to obedience and submission."[161]

[161] As-Ṣalāh (p. 84)

Evidence of takfir of the one who abandons salah and his removal from Islam

As mentioned before, the Imāms of the Sunnah addressed the issue of takfir of the one who abandons the prayer, this is due to:

The prayer is the most important pillar which a servant's tawhid is known for.

Al-Marwazī said: “There is no deed after the oneness of Allah better than the prayer, because it begins with tawḥīd and glorification of Allah through takbīr (saying Allahu akbar), followed by praise of Allah, which is the recitation of al-Fātiḥah, consisting of praise, glorification, and supplication. Likewise, the tasbīḥ in bowing and prostration, the takbīrs at every movement up and down—all of that is tawḥīd and glorification of Him. It ends with the testimony of tawḥīd for Him and messengership for His Messenger. Its bowing and prostration are humility to Him and submission; the raising of the hands at the start and during bowing and rising from it is to glorify Allah and revere Him. The placing of the right hand over the left in standing is a sign of humility and surrender to servitude.”[162]

The text describes the one who leaves the prayer as a disbeliever, mushrik, and one who exits the religion.

Ibn Baṭṭah, may Allah have mercy on him, said: “Allah says: Turning to Him in repentance and fear Him and establish the prayer, and do not be of the polytheists [al-Rūm: 31]. So Allah has made the one who abandons the prayer a polytheist, outside of faith—because this address is to the believers, warning them not to abandon the prayer lest they exit faith and become like the polytheists.”[163]

al-Marwazī said: “Allāh says: Establish the prayer and do not be of the polytheists—thus clarifying that the sign of being among the polytheists is abandoning the establishment of the prayer.”[164]

Jābir ibn ʿAbd Allāh, may Allah be pleased with him: The Prophet ﷺ said: “Between a man and shirk and kufr is the abandonment of the prayer”[165]

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[162] Taʿẓīm Qadr al-Ṣalāh (1/268)
[163] al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (1157)
[164] Taʿẓīm Qadr al-Ṣalāh (2/1006)
[165] Muslim (134)

al-Tirmidhī said (2617): “Between kufr and īmān is the abandonment of the prayer.”

al-Nasāʾī said (328): “There is nothing between a servant and kufr except the abandonment of the prayer.”

Buraydah al-Aslamī, may Allah be pleased with him narrated: I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: “The covenant between us and them is the prayer; whoever abandons it has disbelieved.”[166]

From Thawbān, the freed slave of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who said: I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: “Between a servant and disbelief and faith is the prayer. So whoever abandons it has committed shirk.”[167]

And from ʿUbādah ibn al-Ṣāmit, may Allah be pleased with him, who said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ instructed us, saying: “Do not associate anything with Allah, even if you are burned or cut into pieces or crucified, and do not deliberately abandon the prayer; for whoever abandons it deliberately has left the religion.”[168]

Ibn Masʿūd, may Allah be pleased with him, said: “Abandoning it is disbelief.”[169]

Ibn Taymiyyah said: “As for interpreting it as kufr dūna kufr, this is, in general, a sound approach and a valid interpretation in such types of statements. Indeed, such an explanation has come from the Prophet ﷺ, his Companions, and the Tābiʿīn in many instances, clearly interpreted in this way. However, the kufr mentioned in relation to the prayer is the greater disbelief for several reasons:

First: Absolute, unqualified kufr refers to the greater kufr that expels from the religion. The term defaults to this unless there is evidence diverting it elsewhere. In every instance where it was otherwise, clear contextual indicators were present. Anyone who contemplates the context of each narration will notice that. But here, there is nothing requiring deviation from the apparent meaning. Rather, everything reinforces it.

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[166] Ahmad (22937), al-Nasāʾī (326), al-Tirmidhī (2621), who said: This ḥadīth is ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ gharīb

[167] Narrated by al-Lālikāʾī (1521), who said: Its chain is authentic according to the conditions of Muslim.

[168] Narrated by Muḥammad ibn Naṣr in Taʿẓīm Qadr al-Ṣalāh (920), and by al-Lālikāʾī (1522). Al-Mundhirī said in al-Targhīb wa al-Tarhīb (809): It was narrated by al-Ṭabarānī and Muḥammad ibn Naṣr in his book on prayer with two chains that are not objectionable.

[169] Taʿẓīm Qadr al-Ṣalāh (938)

Second: This kufr is mentioned in definite terms (i.e., with al-), such as in his saying: 'There is nothing between the servant and kufr'—or in some narrations: 'and shirk'. The definite article (al-kufr) refers to the well-known kufr—the one that expels from the religion.

Third: In some ḥadīths, it says: 'He has left the religion.' In others: 'Between him and īmān,' or: 'Between him and kufr'—all of which indicate that prayer is the boundary: performing it enters him into īmān, and abandoning it expels him from it.

Fourth: His saying: 'There is nothing between the servant and kufr except abandoning prayer,' and, 'The companions of Muḥammad ﷺ did not see anything from the actions that, if abandoned, constituted kufr—except prayer,' cannot refer to anything but greater kufr.

Fifth: The wording comes to specify prayer and demonstrate its special status above other acts. If the kufr mentioned were merely fisq, then most obligations would share in that, which negates the exclusivity.

Sixth: He clarified that prayer is the last part of the religion. If the final part is lost, the entire religion is lost.

Seventh: He clarified that prayer is the covenant between us and the disbelievers—who are outside the religion. This implies that the one who abandons this covenant has committed kufr, just as the one who upholds it has entered the religion. This only fits kufr that expels from the religion.

Eighth: The statement of 'Umar: 'There is no share in Islām for the one who abandons prayer,' is the clearest expression of being outside the religion—likewise the words of Ibn Masʿūd and others. He also clarified that what is meant is not merely delaying it outside of its time, but total abandonment. This can only apply to what expels from the religion.

Ninth: As already mentioned from the ḥadīth of Muʿādh: 'A tent without a pole cannot stand. Similarly, the religion cannot stand without prayer.'

These reasons invalidate the interpretation of those who limit the kufr to those who abandon prayer out of juhūd (denial). Also, his saying: 'They did not consider the abandonment of any act to be kufr except prayer,' and, 'Nothing stands between the servant and kufr except...'—all of this restricts kufr specifically to prayer. And denial is not unique to prayer; it applies equally to other acts.

In fact, juhūd itself is kufr, even if a person performs the deed afterward—it still doesn't benefit him. So how could the ruling be attached to something that wasn't mentioned? What is mentioned is abandonment, which includes both denial and laziness. Deviating from the literal meaning without reason is not acceptable."[170]

Condition of repentance is establishing the prayer

Ibn Baṭṭah said: Allah the Exalted said: "Being upright for Allah, not associating anything with Him." [al-Ḥajj: 31] Then He described the monotheists—those who associate nothing with Him—saying: "And they were not commanded except to worship Allah, devoting the religion solely to Him, as ḥunafā' (upright in monotheism), and to establish the prayer and give zakāh. That is the upright religion." [al-Bayyina: 5] So, He—Exalted is His praise and holy are His names—informed us that the ḥanīf Muslim is upon the upright religion, and that this upright religion is defined by establishing the prayer and giving the zakāh. Whoever abandons them is a mushrik, whom we have been commanded to fight and kill until he repents—and his repentance is not accepted except by establishing the prayer and paying the zakāh.As Allah said: "So kill the polytheists wherever you find them, and capture them, and besiege them, and lie in wait for them at every ambush. But if they repent, establish the prayer, and give the zakāh, then let them go their way." [al-Tawbah: 5] And He said: "But if they repent, establish the prayer, and give the zakāh, then they are your brothers in religion." [al-Tawbah: 11]"[171]

Ibn al-Qayyim said: Allah's saying: "If they repent, establish the prayer, and give the zakāh, then they are your brothers in religion..." [al-Tawbah: 11]—He made their brotherhood to the believers contingent upon performing the prayer. So, if they do not perform it, they are not brothers to the believers, and thus not believers themselves. For Allah says: "Indeed, the believers are but brothers." [al-Ḥujurāt: 10]"[172]

Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī said: "The interpretation of Allah's saying: "If they repent, establish the prayer, and give the zakāh, then they are your brothers in religion..." [al-Tawbah: 11] He—Exalted is His praise—says: If these polytheists—whom I have commanded you, O believers, to kill—repent from their disbelief and shirk with Allah, and return to faith in Him and His Messenger, and turn in obedience to Him, and establish the prescribed prayer and perform it as due, and give the prescribed zakāh to those entitled to it, then:"...they are your brothers in religion..." Meaning: They are your brothers in the religion Allah has commanded you with—that is, Islam."[173]

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[170] Sharḥ al-ʿUmda by Ibn Taymiyyah 2/76-79
[171] al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (955)
[172] al-Ṣalāh (p. 59)
[173] Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī (11/361)

Al-Lālikāʾī, may Allah have mercy on him, said: Allah described religion both in word and action, saying: "If they repent, establish the prayer, and give the zakāh, then they are your brothers in religion..." So repentance from shirk—which is: faith, prayer, and zakāh—is action, just as al-Awzāʿī said: "Faith is not sound without speech; and speech and faith are not sound without action; and faith, speech, and action are not sound except with an intention in accordance with the Sunnah."[174]

So the early predecessors never separated between faith and action. Action is from faith, and faith is from action

That the Prophet ﷺ made the one who prays to be the Muslim

From Busar ibn Mihjan, from his father Mihjan, may Allah be pleased with him, who said: He was sitting in a gathering with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ when the call to prayer was made. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ stood and prayed, then returned while Mihjan was still sitting in his place. So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to him: "What prevented you from praying with the people? Are you not a Muslim man?" He said: "Indeed, O Messenger of Allah, but I had already prayed with my family." He ﷺ replied: "Even so, when you come (to the mosque), pray with the people—even if you have already prayed."[175]

Ibn al-Qayyim said: The Prophet ﷺ made the distinction between Muslim and disbeliever: the prayer. You find from the wording of the ḥadīth: "If you were truly a Muslim, you would have prayed." It's similar to saying: "Why aren't you speaking—aren't you someone who speaks?" Or: "Why aren't you moving—aren't you alive?" If Islam were valid without prayer, the Prophet ﷺ would not have said to someone he saw not praying: "Are you not a Muslim man?"[176]

Abandoning the prayer is from turning away from the religion of Allah

Al-Marwazi said:"Allah the Blessed and Exalted said, in rebuke of the disbeliever: "But he neither believed nor prayed. But he denied and turned away" [Al-Qiyamah]. He mentioned nothing alongside belief except prayer. "Denial" is the opposite of belief, and "turning away" refers to abandoning prayer and other obligations."[177]

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[174] Al-Lālikāʾī (1446)
[175] Aḥmad (16395), al-Nasāʾī in al-Kubrā (932); it is a ḥasan (sound) ḥadīth.
[176] al-Ṣalāh (p. 78)
[177] Taʿzim Qadr as-Salah (1/129)

Ibn al-Qayyim said: “But he neither believed nor prayed. But he denied and turned away” [Al-Qiyamah]. Since Islam is both belief in what is reported and submission to the command, Allah made its two opposites: disbelief and abandoning the prayer. He contrasted belief with denial, and prayer with turning away. So He said: “But he denied and turned away.” Just as the one who denies is a disbeliever, the one who turns away from prayer is a disbeliever. Just as Islam is nullified by denial, it is nullified by turning away from prayer.”[178]

Ibn Kathir said: His saying:
“No! Indeed, it is the Flame—stripping away the scalp—calling [those] who turned their backs and turned away and collected [wealth] and hoarded” [Al-Maʿarij] – meaning: the fire calls out to its people, those whom Allah created for it, and decreed that they would do its deeds in the worldly life... They were, as Allah said, “those who turned back and turned away,” i.e., they denied with their hearts and abandoned action with their limbs.”[179]

And he also said in his Tafsir (8/421): His saying:“None will enter it except the most wretched”—meaning: no one will enter it in a manner that fully encompasses him except the most wretched one. Then He explained it, saying: “He who denied”—with his heart—“and turned away”—from acting with his limbs and bodily parts.”[180]

Prayer is the Pillar of One's islam, if it is abandoned the rest collapses

Muʿādh ibn Jabal said: We were returning with the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ from the expedition of Tabūk. When I saw him alone, I said: “O Messenger of Allāh, inform me of a deed that will admit me into Paradise.” He said... “Shall I not tell you about the head of the matter, its pillar, and its highest peak?” “As for the head of the matter: it is al-Islām—whoever submits is safe. As for its pillar: it is the ṣalāh”[181]

Ibn al-Qayyim said: “The reasoning here is that the Prophet ﷺ stated that the ṣalāh is to Islām as the central pole is to a tent. Just as the tent collapses when its pole falls, likewise Islām falls with the loss of the ṣalāh. This very statement was used by Imām Aḥmad as evidence.”[182]

Ibn Rajab said: “He made the ṣalāh like the main pillar (ʿamūd) of the tent (fustāṭ), which the tent cannot stand without. If the pillar falls, the tent falls and cannot stand without it.”[183]

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[178] As-Salah (p. 59)
[179] Tafsir Ibn Kathir (8/225)
[180] Tafsir Ibn Kathir (8/421)
[181] Narrated by Ibn Abī Shaybah in al-Īmān (1), and it is an authentic ḥadīth
[182] as-Ṣalāh (p. 72)
[183] Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm wa al-Ḥikam (p. 146)

Whoever dies performing prayer without proper ruku and sujud will die upon a religion other then the prophet ﷺ – so what about the one who doesn't pray!

From Abū ʻAbd Allāh al-Ashʻarī: "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ prayed with his companions, then sat with a group among them. A man entered and began to pray, making his rukūʻ and sujūd very quickly—pecking. The Prophet ﷺ said: "Do you see this person? Whoever dies upon this has died upon other than the religion of Muḥammad. He pecks in his prayer like a crow pecking at blood. The likeness of the one who bows and pecks in sujūd is like a hungry man who eats only one or two dates—what benefit will that bring him? So perfect your wuḍū'. Woe to the heels from the Fire! Complete your rukūʻ and sujūd."[184]

Zayd ibn Wahb said: Ḥudhayfah saw a man who did not perfect his rukūʻ and sujūd. He said: "You have not prayed. And if you were to die like this, you would die upon other than the fiṭrah upon which Allāh created Muḥammad."[185]

Ibn Rajab said: "What is correct is that this is the statement of Ḥudhayfah, though it carries the weight of a marfūʻ narration, due to its reference to the fiṭrah of Muḥammad ﷺ."[186]

Ājurrī said : "These narrations and reports regarding abandoning and neglecting the ṣalāh—along with many others not mentioned here for brevity, such as the words of Ḥudhayfah (رضي الله عنه) to the one who did not complete his ṣalāh: "If he had died like this, he would have died upon other than the fiṭrah of Muḥammad"—and likewise the report from Bilāl and others—all indicate that ṣalāh is a part of īmān, and that whoever does not pray has neither īmān nor Islām."[187]

Whoever dies abandoning prayer the protection of Allah is lifted from him

Anas ibn Mālik, who said: The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: "I have been commanded to fight the people until they say: Lā ilāha illa Allāh. If they say it, and they perform our ṣalāh, and they face our qiblah, and they slaughter as we slaughter—then their blood and wealth become inviolable to us, except by right, and their reckoning is with Allāh."[188]

From Ḥumayd, who said: Maimūn ibn Siyāḥ asked Anas ibn Mālik: "O Abā Ḥamzah, what makes a person's blood and wealth protected?" He replied: "Whoever testifies that there is no

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[184] Ibn Khuzaymah in his Ṣaḥīḥ (665)
[185] Narrated by al-Bukhārī (791). This has also been narrated as a marfūʻ (attributed directly to the Prophet ﷺ),
[186] Fatḥ al-Bārī by Ibn Rajab (7/159)
[187] ash-Sharīʻah (342)
[188] al-Bukhārī (392)

god but Allāh, faces our qiblah, performs our ṣalāh, and eats from our slaughtered meat—he is a Muslim. He has the rights of a Muslim and bears the responsibilities of a Muslim."[189]

Ibn al-Qayyim said: "The indication here comes from two angles: "That the Prophet ﷺ only deemed a person to be a Muslim through these three matters—so one is not a Muslim without them and If someone prays toward the east, he is not a Muslim until he prays toward the Muslims' qiblah—so how about someone who does not pray at all?!"[190]

As a side note the one who establishes prayers, his blood is not permissible

Ubayd Allāh ibn 'Adiyy ibn al-Khiyār reported that a man from the Anṣār told him: He came to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ while he was sitting in a gathering and privately sought permission to kill a man among the munāfiqīn (hypocrites). The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ then raised his voice and said, "Does he not testify that there is no god but Allāh?" The man replied, "Yes, O Messenger of Allāh—but he has no real testimony." The Prophet ﷺ asked, "Does he not testify that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh?" He said, "Yes, O Messenger of Allāh—but there is no sincerity in his testimony." The Prophet ﷺ asked, "Does he not pray?" He said, "Yes, O Messenger of Allāh—but he has no real prayer." The Prophet ﷺ replied, "They are the ones whom Allāh has forbidden me from (killing)."[191]

This is why the Prophet ﷺ, when he would raid a people, would not do so until the morning. If he heard the adhān (call to prayer), he would hold back. If he did not hear it, he would attack them after dawn.

Anas said: "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ would not raid a people until morning. If he heard the adhān, he held back. If he did not hear it, he raided them after dawn. We arrived at Khaybar at night."[192]

Rebellion against ruler is not permissible as long as the prayer is established

Ubādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit said: "The Prophet ﷺ called us and we pledged allegiance to him. Among what he took from us was that we listen and obey in ease and hardship, in what we like and dislike, and even when others are preferred over us, and that we do not dispute the authority of

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[189] Narrated by al-Bukhārī (393).
[190] as-Ṣalāh (p. 75)
[191] Aḥmad (23670)
[192] al-Bukhārī (2943)

its people—unless we see clear, manifest kufr bawāḥ, regarding which we have a clear proof from Allāh."[193]

Umm Salamah reported that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: There will be rulers; you will approve of some of what they do and disapprove of other things. Whoever disapproves is innocent, and whoever rejects is safe. But whoever is content and follows them bears responsibility. They said: Shall we not fight them? He said, "No—as long as they pray."[194]

Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah said: "The Prophet ﷺ commanded us to refrain from fighting these rulers so long as they pray. This proves that if they were to abandon the ṣalāh, they would be fought. And it is not permissible to fight the ruler unless he commits kufr. Merely being a fāsiq (open sinner) is not a reason to fight him. If it were, he would be fought for delaying the prayer just as he is fought for abandoning it."[195]

It is clear fighting the ruler is not permissible unless the ruler abandons the prayer and has clear kufr. This can be further clarified by Shaykh Bin Baz

Shaykh Ibn Bāz said:

He said: "The texts of the Sunnah clarify the meaning of the Quranic injunctions and restrict the general command to obey rulers, specifying that obedience to them is only in what is right. Muslims are obligated to obey their leaders in what is right, but not in sin. If rulers command disobedience to Allah, they are not to be obeyed in that matter, but this does not justify rebellion against them.

The Prophet ﷺ said: "Whoever has a ruler appointed over him and sees him committing an act of disobedience to Allah, let him dislike what he does, but he must not withdraw his hand from obedience." He also said: "Whoever rebels against obedience and separates from the community, then dies, dies a death of ignorance (jāhiliyyah)." And he said: "A person must listen and obey (the ruler) in what he likes and dislikes, unless he is ordered to sin. If he is ordered to sin, then he must neither listen nor obey."

When the Prophet ﷺ mentioned that there would be rulers whose actions would be both good and evil, the Companions asked: "What do you command us to do?" He replied: "Give them their due rights and ask Allah for your rights."

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[193] Narrated by al-Bukhārī (7055) and Muslim (1709).
[194] Muslim (1854)
[195] Sharḥ al-ʿUmda (2/80)

ʿUbādah ibn al-Ṣāmit رضي الله عنه said: "We pledged allegiance to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to listen and obey in times of ease and hardship, in difficulty and comfort, and even when others are given preference over us. And we pledged not to dispute the authority of those in charge, unless we see clear and open disbelief (kufr bawāḥ), for which we have undeniable proof from Allah." This hadith clearly shows that it is not permissible to dispute the authority of rulers or rebel against them unless there is clear and open disbelief (kufr bawāḥ) with undeniable evidence from Allah. The reason for this strict condition is that rebellion against rulers often leads to great corruption and immense harm. It results in insecurity, loss of rights, and the inability to prevent oppression or protect the oppressed. Roads become unsafe, and disorder spreads, leading to an even worse situation.

Therefore, even if clear disbelief is observed, it is only permissible to revolt if the Muslims have the capability to remove the ruler and replace him with a just leader—without causing greater harm. If they lack the ability to do so, or if rebellion would result in a worse situation, then they must not revolt. A fundamental principle in Islamic law, agreed upon by scholars, is: "It is not permissible to remove an evil by bringing about a greater evil. Rather, evil must be eliminated in a way that either completely removes it or at least minimizes it." Removing one evil by causing a greater evil is impermissible by the consensus of the scholars.

Thus, if a group seeks to remove a ruler who has committed clear disbelief, they must ensure that they have the capability to remove him, they can install a righteous leader in his place, and their action will not lead to greater corruption, such as widespread insecurity, oppression, unlawful killings, or destruction. If rebelling would cause massive corruption, insecurity, oppression, and harm to innocent people, then it is impermissible. Instead, patience, obedience in what is right, advising the rulers, praying for their guidance, and striving to reduce harm while increasing good are the correct approaches. This ensures the well-being of the Muslim community and the preservation of security and stability."[196]

Salah is the key for the acceptance of deeds. If it's sound, the rest of the deeds will be sound and if it's corrupt, the deeds will be too.

From Abū Hurayrah (raḍiy Allāhu ʿanhu): The Prophet ﷺ said, "The first thing for which a servant will be brought to account on the Day of Resurrection from his deeds is his ṣalāh. If it is sound, he will have succeeded and prospered; if it is corrupt, he will have failed and lost..."[197]

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[196] Majmūʿ Fatāwā wa Maqālāt Mutanawwiʿah by Shaykh Ibn Bāz 8/203-204

[197] Narrated by at-Tirmidhī (413), and an-Nasāʾī in al-Kubrā (322)

From Tamīm ibn Salamah (raḥimahullāh): “The first thing the servant is asked about is his ṣalāh. If it is accepted from him, all his other deeds will be accepted. If it is rejected, all his deeds will be rejected.”[198]

ʿAwn ibn ʿAbdillāh (raḥimahullāh) said: “When the servant enters his grave, the first thing he is asked about is his ṣalāh. If it is accepted, then his other deeds are examined. If it is not accepted, nothing else is considered.”[199]

Ibn al-Qayyim said: “As for abandoning the ṣalāh entirely, no deed will be accepted along with it—just as no deed is accepted along with shirk. For the ṣalāh is the pillar of Islām, as authentically reported from the Prophet ﷺ. The rest of the acts of worship are like ropes, stakes, and supports; and if a tent has no pole, it cannot benefit from its other parts. So the acceptance of all other deeds is dependent on the acceptance of the ṣalāh. If it is rejected, the rest of the deeds are rejected. And the proof for this has already been mentioned.”[200]

From Buraydah (raḍiy Allāhu ʿanhu): The Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever leaves ṣalāt al-ʿaṣr, his deeds have been nullified.”[201].

From ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUmar (raḍiy Allāhu ʿanhumā): The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, “The one who misses ṣalāt al-ʿaṣr—it is as if he has been robbed of his family and wealth.”[202]

Ibn al-Qayyim said: “If it is asked—what benefit is there in specifically linking ṣalāt al-ʿaṣr to the nullification of deeds as opposed to other prayers? The response: The hadīth does not deny nullification from other prayers except by mafhum al-laqab (implication by naming), which is a very weak implication. The mention of ʿaṣr specifically is due to its special status among the prayers. That is why it is ṣalāt al-wusṭā (the middle prayer), as is clearly and authentically stated by the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ.”[203]

These narrations ṣalāt al-ʿaṣr also provide evidence that abandoning prayer nullifies one's deed. If this is the case with one prayer, what about the one who abandons all their prayers.

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[198] Ibn Abī Shaybah (7856).
[199] Taʿẓīm Qadr aṣ-Ṣalāh (194)
[200] aṣ-Ṣalāh (p. 111)
[201] al-Bukhārī (553)
[202] al-Bukhārī (552) and Muslim (626).
[203] aṣ-Ṣalāh (p. 111)

Prayer is the mark by which the Prophet ﷺ will recognise his Ummah

Abū Hurayrah narrated: The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ visited the graveyard and said: "Peace be upon you, O dwelling of believing people! We, if Allāh wills, shall soon follow you. I wish I had seen my brothers!" They said: "Are we not your brothers, O Messenger of Allāh?" He said: "You are my companions. My brothers are those who have not yet come." They said: "How will you recognize those of your Ummah who have not yet come, O Messenger of Allāh?" He said: "Do you not see that if a man had horses with white blazes and white feet among horses that are pure black, would he not recognize his own?" They said: "Yes, O Messenger of Allāh." He said: "They will come with radiant faces and limbs from the traces of wuḍū', and I will precede them to the ḥawḍ. Beware—men will be turned away from my ḥawḍ just as stray camels are turned away. I will call them, saying, 'Come!' But it will be said: 'They changed after you.' So I will say: 'Away with them! Away with them!'"

Ibn Taymiyyah said: "This indicates that whoever does not have the marks of wuḍū'—the shining limbs—will not be recognized by the Prophet ﷺ and therefore is not from his Ummah."[204]

Ibn Taymiyyah also said (21/171): "As for the one who never performed wudū' and never prayed at all, that is evidence that he will not be recognized on the Day of Judgment."[205]

The one who doesn't pray, will also not do wudū' so the prophet ﷺ will not recognise him.

The one who abandons the prayer will be resurrected with the leaders of kufr

ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr from the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, that he mentioned prayer one day and said: "Whoever maintains it, it will be light, proof, and salvation for him on the Day of Judgment. But whoever does not maintain it will have no light, no proof, and no salvation—and he will come on the Day of Judgment with Qarūn, Firʿawn, Hāmān, and Ubayy ibn Khalaf."[206]

Allah has forbidden the fire from touching the places of prostration.

It is narrated from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said: "...When Allāh wills to show mercy to whomever He wills among the people of Hell, He will command the angels to take out those who used to worship Allāh. They will recognize them by the traces of prostration, and Allāh will forbid the Fire from consuming the marks of prostration. So they will be brought out of

[204] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/612)
[205] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (21/171)
[206] Aḥmad in al-Īmān (34), and it is an authentic ḥadīth

the Fire, through the Fire will have consumed all of the sons of Ādam except the marks of prostration. They will be brought out, charred, and then the water of life will be poured on them, and they will grow as seeds grow by the flow of a stream.....There remains one man, facing the Fire, the last person among the people of Hell to enter Paradise. He will say: 'O Lord, turn my face away from the Fire, for its air has poisoned me, and its blaze has burned me...'"[207]

This ḥadīth is a direct refutation of the Murji'ah, who argue from the ḥadīths of intercession that the one who abandons prayer will enter Paradise merely by uttering the statement of tawḥīd without doing any deeds. But this man was recognized by the angels because of his prostration, indicating he was among those who used to pray in the world.

Ibn Taymiyyah said: "It is known, then, that whoever did not prostrate to Allāh at all will be completely consumed by the Fire."[208]

The one who abandons prayer will not be recognised by the angels.

Al-Marwazī said: "Do you not see that the one who abandons prayer is not from the religion of Islām—the people for whom there is hope to be taken out of Hell and entered into Paradise through the intercession of the intercessors? As mentioned in the ḥadīth of intercession narrated by Abū Hurayrah and Abū Saʿīd—those taken out of the Fire are recognized by the traces of prostration. This clearly shows that those eligible for intercession and removal from Hell are the ones who used to pray."[209]

Ibn Rajab said: "The purpose of narrating the full version of the ḥadīth in this chapter is to demonstrate that the Fire does not consume the places of prostration of the people of tawḥīd. This is evidence of the great virtue and status of prostration with Allāh, as He has forbidden the Fire from consuming the places of prostration of the people of tawḥīd. Based on this, some scholars have used this as proof that the one who abandons prayer is a disbeliever—since the Fire consumes his entire body and he is not treated like the sinful monotheists. This especially applies to the one who never prayed at all."[210]

The distinction between the hypocrite and Muslims will be marked by prostration on the day of judgement.

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[207] al-Bukhārī (806, 7437) and Muslim (182)
[208] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/611)
[209] Taʿẓīm Qadr aṣ-Ṣalāh (2/1009)
[210] Fatḥ al-Bārī by Ibn Rajab (7/241)

Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī narrated, the Prophet ﷺ said: "Our Lord will reveal His Shin, and every believing man and woman will prostrate to Him. Those who used to prostrate in the world for show and reputation will remain; they will attempt to prostrate, but their backs will become a single solid piece."[211].

Al-Marwazī said: "Among the signs is that hypocrites will be distinguished from believers on the Day of Judgment through prostration. Allah said: 'The Day the Shin will be uncovered and they will be called to prostration, but they will not be able to. Their eyes will be humbled, humiliation covering them. They were indeed invited to prostration when they were sound.' [Sūrat al-Qalam: 42–43]." That is, when the believers see their Lord, they fall in prostration. The hypocrites are called to prostrate, but they try and are unable—it is prevented from them as a punishment for abandoning prostration to Allah in the world. Allah said: "While they were sound," meaning before anything had occurred in their backs to prevent them from prostrating."[212]

Ibn Taymiyyah said: "If this is the fate of those who prostrated out of show, then what about those who never prostrated at all?"[213]

Ibn al-Qayyim said: Allah said: "Shall We treat the Muslims like the criminals? What is wrong with you, how do you judge?" Until His saying: "The Day the Shin will be uncovered and they are called to prostration but they will not be able to. Their eyes humbled, humiliation covering them, and they had been invited to prostration while they were sound. So leave Me to deal with the one who denies this statement. We will gradually lead them [to punishment] from where they do not know." [Sūrat al-Qalam: 35–44]

The indication from this verse is that Allah declares He will not treat the Muslims like the criminals, for that would contradict His wisdom and justice. Then He mentions the condition of the criminals—those in opposition to the Muslims. He says that when He reveals His Shin, they will be called to prostrate to their Lord, but they will be prevented. They will not be able to prostrate alongside the Muslims in the Hereafter as a punishment for refusing to prostrate in this world. This shows that they are among the disbelievers and hypocrites whose backs remain upright like the horns of cattle when the Muslims prostrate. Had they truly been among the Muslims, they would have been permitted to prostrate as the Muslims are."[214]

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[211] al-Bukhārī (4919)
[212] Taʿẓīm Qadr aṣ-Ṣalāh (1/268)
[213] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/611)
[214] Aṣ-Ṣalāh (p. 49)

The ijmāʿ of the ṣaḥābah and Tabi'in regarding Takfir of the one who abandons the prayer and his removal from islam

From the evidence that one who abandons out of laziness or out of denial, the statements are numerous.

Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq (رضي الله عنه) said, when he fought those who refused to pay the zakāh: "By Allah, I will fight anyone who makes a distinction between the prayer and the zakāh, for zakāh is the right due on wealth. By Allah, if they were to withhold from me a young she-goat which they used to give to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, I would fight them for withholding it."

Ibn Rajab said: "This indicates that whoever abandons the prayer is to be fought, for it is a right due on the body, just as zakāh is a right due on wealth. This points to the fact that fighting the one who abandons prayer was a matter of consensus, as Abū Bakr used it as the foundational analogy."[215]

And 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) agreed with him, saying: "By Allah, it was nothing other than Allah expanding the chest of Abū Bakr to the truth, and I recognized it as the truth."

Abū al-'Āliyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "When Abū Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) would dispatch an army to those who had apostatized, he would say: 'Camp near them, and if you hear the adhān before sunrise, then leave them. But if not, then launch the attack upon them.'"[216]

Shurayk narrated, from Abū al-Milīḥ:r is outside the fold "I heard 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) say: 'There is no Islam for the one who does not pray.' He was asked: 'On the pulpit?' He replied: 'Yes.'"[217]

Likewise, when 'Umar was stabbed in the presence of other Companions, he said: "There is no share in Islam for the one who abandons the prayer."[218]

Ibn Taymiyyah said: "This is the consensus of the Companions. 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him), when told about someone not praying, said: 'Yes, there is no share in Islam for the one who abandons prayer.' And his story is well-known in the authentic books. In another

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[215] Jāmiʿ al-'Ulūm wa-l-Ḥikam (p. 234)
[216] Taʿẓīm Qadr al-Ṣalāh (973)
[217] Taʿẓīm Qadr al-Ṣalāh (930, 431) – chain is authentic]
[218] al-Īmān by Ibn Abī Shaybah (103)

narration, he said: ‘There is no Islam for the one who does not pray,’ and this was said in the presence of the Companions.”[219]

Ibn al-Qayyim said: “He said this in the presence of the Companions, and none of them objected to him. Similar statements have also been reported from Muʿādh ibn Jabal, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAwf, and Abū Hurayrah. No differing view is known from any Companion.”[220]

Ayyoob as-Sakhtiyānī (رحمه الله) said: “If differing views reach you from the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ, and you find among those who differed Abū Bakr and ʿUmar, then hold firmly to their view, for it is the ḥaqq, and it is the sunnah.”[221]

So what then if there was no difference at all among the Ṣaḥābah? Who would dare oppose them except someone driven by hawā and personal opinion?

Mujāhid (رحمه الله) said:
“If people differ in something, then look at what ʿUmar (رضي الله عنه) did—follow it.”[222]

ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (رضي الله عنه) said: “Whoever does not pray is a kāfir.”[223]

Ibn Masʿūd (رضي الله عنه) said: “Abandoning it is kufr.” And he said: “Kufr is abandoning the ṣalāh.” And he said: “There is no dīn for the one who has no ṣalāh.”[224]

Jābir ibn ʿAbdillāh (رضي الله عنه) was asked: “What separates a servant from kufr?” He replied: “Abandoning the ṣalāh.”[225]

Ḥudhayfah (رضي الله عنه) said to a man who was praying without completing his rukūʿ and sujūd properly: “You have not prayed. And if you were to die [in this state], you would die upon other than the fiṭrah that Allah created Muḥammad upon.”[226]

Abū al-Dardāʾ (رضي الله عنه) said: “There is no īmān for the one who has no ṣalāh, and no ṣalāh for the one who has no wuḍūʾ.”[227]

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[219] Sharḥ al-ʿUmdah (2/67)
[220] al-Ṣalāh (p. 79)
[221] Al-Awsaṭ by Ibn al-Mundhir (124)
[222] Al-Awsaṭ by Ibn al-Mundhir (8781)
[223] Al-Īmān by Ibn Abī Shaybah, 126)
[224] Al-Īmān by Aḥmad, 224; Al-ʿAdanī, 26; Taʿẓīm Qadr al-Ṣalāh, 935)
[225] Al-Īmān by Aḥmad (217)
[226] al-Bukhārī (791); Aḥmad in Al-Īmān (227)
[227] Al-Īmān by Aḥmad (222)

ʿIkrimah reported from Ibn ʿAbbās (رضي الله عنهما) that when a doctor told him, after water entered his eye: "Lie down for seven days and do not pray," Ibn ʿAbbās replied: "Whoever abandons the ṣalāh has committed kufr."[228]

ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr (رضي الله عنه) said: "...And whoever abandons the ṣalāh has no dīn."[229]

Saʿīd ibn ʿUmārah, one of the men of Banū Saʿd ibn Bakr who had companionship with the Prophet ﷺ, said: "There is no ṣalāh for the one who has no wuḍū', and there is no īmān for the one who has no ṣalāh."[230]

ʿUbaydullāh ibn ʿUbayd al-Kalāʿī said: Makhḥūl once took me by the hand and said: "O Abā Wahb, what do you say about a man who deliberately abandons an obligatory prayer?" I replied: "He is a sinful believer." So he gripped my hand tighter and said: "O Abā Wahb, let the status of īmān be great in your heart. Whoever deliberately abandons an obligatory prayer, the covenant of Allah has been lifted from him. And whoever loses Allah's covenant has committed kufr."[231]

Masrūq said:"Whoever drinks wine has committed kufr. And his kufr is that he no longer has ṣalāh."[232]

Abū ʿAbdillāh al-Akhnaṣ said: "Whoever drinks intoxicants exposes himself to abandoning ṣalāh. And whoever abandons ṣalāh has exited from īmān."[233]

ʿAbdullāh ibn Shaqīq said: "The Companions of the Prophet ﷺ did not consider the abandonment of any deed to be kufr, except for the ṣalāh."[234]

al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī said: "It has reached me that the companions of Muḥammad ﷺ used to say: Between a servant and associating partners (shirk), which renders him a disbeliever, is the abandonment of prayer without an excuse."[235]

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[228] Reported by al-Najjād; Sharḥ al-ʿUmdah, 2/69
[229] Al-Īmān by Aḥmad (233)
[230] Al-Īmān by Aḥmad (235)
[231] Al-Īmān by Aḥmad (129)
[232] Sunan al-Nasāʾī (5665)
[233] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/303)
[234] Al-Īmān by Ibn Abī Shaybah (137)
[235] Al-Īmān by Aḥmad (210)

ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAmr said: "Whoever drinks alcohol in the evening becomes a polytheist (mushrik) by morning, and whoever drinks it in the morning becomes a mushrik by evening." Ibrāhīm al-Nakhaʿī was asked: "How so?" He replied: "Because he abandons the prayer."[236]

al-Qāsim ibn Mukhaymira said: "They neglected the appointed times (of prayer), but did not leave the prayer entirely. Had they abandoned it altogether, they would have become disbelievers by doing so."[237]

Maʿqil ibn ʿUbayd Allāh al-Jazarī said: "I said to Nāfiʿ: A man acknowledges what Allāh has revealed and what the Prophet of Allāh explained, but he says: 'I will leave the prayer, even though I know it is a right from Allāh.' He (Nāfiʿ) said: 'That one is a kāfir.' Then he pulled his hand from mine in anger and turned away."[238]

It is reported from Ayyūb (raḥimahu Allāh): "Abandoning the prayer is kufr—there is no difference of opinion about it."[239]

Ibn Baṭṭah (raḥimahu Allāh) said: "These reports, narrations, and prophetic traditions from the Prophet, his Companions, and the Followers (tābiʿūn) all indicate to any person of intellect, or to one with even a flicker of life in his heart, that the one who abandons the prayer or denies the obligations has committed kufr and is expelled from the religion."[240]

These are just a few of the numerous statements which are clear regarding the consensus of the companions and those who came after.

Shaykh Albani, may Allah forgive him his error, opposed this ijmāʿ and went to the extreme of calling those who declare the one as disbeliever for abandoning salah or going to extremes of declaring the muslims as a disbeliever.

He mentions: "It is known that scholars have differed regarding the ruling on the one who abandons prayer, especially when he believes in its obligation. The majority hold that he does not become a disbeliever (kāfir), but is rather considered a sinful (fāsiq). Ahmad, as reported, said that he becomes a disbeliever, and that he should be killed for apostasy, not as a legal punishment."

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[236] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā 7/303)
[237] Al-Īmān by Aḥmad (218)
[238] Taʿẓīm Qadr al-Ṣalā (977)
[239] Taʿẓīm Qadr al-Ṣalāh (978)
[240] al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (955)

It has been authentically reported from the Companions that they did not consider any other action, when abandoned, as causing disbelief except prayer.

I believe the correct opinion is that of the majority, and that what is reported from the Companions is not a clear statement that they meant by "kufr" here the major disbelief that leads to eternal punishment in Hell and is not forgivable by Allah."[241]

Sh. al-Albani states: "Here, we say there is no difference between the one who abandons prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, or any other physical act of worship, in that it either leads to disbelief or not. When does it lead to disbelief? When there is denial. When does it not lead to disbelief? When there is belief."[242]

Shaykh Bin Bāz said:

"Third Topic: Ijmaʿ of the Ṣaḥābah (Raḍī Allāhu ʿAnhum)

Those who claim that the person who leaves the prayer intentionally without any excuse is a kāfir - even if they do not deny its obligation - have supported their view with the ijmaʿ of the Ṣaḥābah (Raḍī Allāhu ʿAnhum), as this view was widespread among them. It was spoken of in their circles and places of assembly, and there is no record of anyone among them contradicting it or opposing it.

This indicates that this matter was known to them and firmly established among them, and that they were in agreement on this issue.

Among those who reported this ijmaʿ: ʿAbd Allāh ibn Shaqīq al-ʿAqīlī, the great Tābiʿī, said: "The companions of the Prophet ﷺ did not consider any action whose abandonment is kufr except the prayer."

Al-Shawkānī said: "It is apparent from the wording that this statement was agreed upon by the Ṣaḥābah, because his saying 'the companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ' is a collective term, which indicates that they were united on this matter."

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī said: "I have been informed that the companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to say: 'Between the servant and shirk and kufr is leaving the prayer without an excuse.'"

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[241] "Hukm Tārik al-Ṣalāh" (p. 17)
[242] al-Mawṣū'a al-'Aqidīya (4/394)

Isḥāq ibn Rāhawayh, as reported by al-Marzūqī, said: "I heard Isḥāq say: 'It has been authentically reported from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ that the one who leaves the prayer is a kāfir, and this was the view of the scholars from the time of the Prophet ﷺ until today. The one who deliberately leaves the prayer without an excuse, even after its time has passed, is a disbeliever.'"

Ibn Naṣr said: "We have mentioned the reports narrated from the Prophet ﷺ regarding the disbelief of the one who leaves the prayer and his being expelled from the religion, and the permissibility of fighting the one who refuses to perform it. Then we received reports from the companions of the Prophet ﷺ to the same effect, and no contradiction has come from any of them."

Al-Ājurrī said: "These authentic narrations and reports regarding the abandonment of prayer, along with others that are too numerous to mention, such as the Hadith of Ḥudhayfah where he said to a man who did not complete his prayer: 'If this man dies, he would die on something other than the Fitrah of Muhammad ﷺ.' Similar statements are found from Bilāl and others, which indicates that prayer is an essential part of faith, and the one who does not pray has no faith or Islam."

Ibn Ḥazm al-Ẓāhirī said: "We do not know of anyone among the companions of the Prophet ﷺ who disagreed on this issue. It has been reported from ʿUmar, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAwf, Muʿādh ibn Jabal, Abū Hurayrah, and others that whoever deliberately leaves a single obligatory prayer until its time passes is a kāfir and an apostate."

Ibn al-Qayyim also supported this consensus with two arguments: **The first:** What was narrated by Ibn Zanjūyah from the report of ʿUmar (Raḍī Allāhu ʿAnhu), who said this in the presence of the companions, and none of them objected to him. Similar statements have been reported from Muʿādh ibn Jabal, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAwf, Abū Hurayrah, and no disagreement has been reported from any of the companions. **The second:** What was narrated from al-Ḥāfiẓ ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq al-Ishbīlī, who said in his book on prayer: "A group of the companions of the Prophet ﷺ and those after them have held that the one who leaves the prayer intentionally until its time has passed is a disbeliever. This includes ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, Muʿādh ibn Jabal, ʿAbd Allāh ibn Masʿūd, Ibn ʿAbbās, Jābir, Abū al-Dardāʾ, and it has also been reported from ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib."

These narrations confirm that this ijmaʿ was declared by the companions of the Prophet ﷺ, and they spoke of it openly in their gatherings. No one among them is known to have contradicted it. If the evidence from the Qurʾān and Sunnah may be subject to interpretation or doubt,

whether in the evidence itself or its chain of narration, then ijmaʿ, as established in the principles of Islamic jurisprudence, is definitively clear in its indication.

Imam al-Shāfiʿī said: "We know that the majority of the companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ do not gather on opposing the Sunnah of the Messenger ﷺ, nor on an error, insha'Allah." In the Muswaddah, al-Qāḍī said: "The ijmaʿ is a definitive proof, and it must be followed. It is prohibited to oppose it, and it is not permissible for the Ummah to gather on error." This ijmaʿ serves as the strongest and clearest proof in this matter, with no possibility for doubt or misinterpretation.

It affirms what the apparent meanings of the texts indicate, that the kufr referred to here is the kufr that removes one from the Millah. It refutes all those who try to divert these texts from their apparent meanings, suggesting that it refers to a lesser form of kufr. This ijmaʿ obligates every fair-minded individual to abandon any view that contradicts it. The four Imams and the majority of scholars hold that ijmaʿ is a definitive, unchallengeable proof. Anyone who differs from the ijmaʿ, may have their own excuse or ijtihād which they will be rewarded for, but this excuse is no longer valid for anyone who has seen this ijmaʿ and is aware of it. And Allah is the bestower of success and guidance to the straight path."[243]

[243] al-Khilāf fī Ḥukm Tārik al-Ṣalāh by Ibn Zāḥim, p. 55-58

In the context of statements reporting the (ijmā') on the disbelief of the one who abandons prayer:

Mujāhid ibn Jabr reported from Jābir ibn Abdullah, who said:
"I asked him: What distinguished between disbelief and faith for you during the time of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ regarding actions? He replied: Prayer."[244]

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (110 AH) said: "I have been informed that the companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to say: Between the servant and committing shirk (polytheism) and becoming a disbeliever is abandoning the prayer without an excuse."[245]

Al-Ḥasan was a major Tabiʿi , who met the senior companions. His statement, even if it was not heard from many companions, was at least a report from a knowledgeable and learned scholar who was aware of the differences and consensus. Scholars give weight to the opinion of someone even lower in rank than al-Ḥasan in such matters.

Abdullah ibn Shaqiq (108 AH) said: "The companions of the Prophet ﷺ did not see anything, when abandoned, as causing disbelief except prayer."[246]

Abdullah ibn Shaqiq was a prominent Tabiʿi, listed by Ibn Saʿd in the first level of the Tabiʿīn of Basrah. He heard from thirteen companions, including major companions such as Umar, Uthman, Ali, Abu Dharr, and many others.

Ayūb al-Sakhtiyānī (131 AH), a well-known Tabiʿi, said: "Abandoning the prayer is disbelief, and there is no difference in this matter."[247]

Ayūb was a leading scholar of his time, and he transmitted the consensus that abandoning prayer is disbelief. This indicates that any disagreement on the matter came after his time, or at the very least, shortly before his death in 131 AH.

Isḥāq ibn Rāhūyah (238 AH) said: "It has been authentically reported from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ that abandoning prayer constitutes disbelief. Likewise, it has been the opinion of scholars from the time of the Prophet ﷺ until today that abandoning the prayer deliberately, without an excuse, until its time passes, is disbelief."

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[244] Taʿẓīm Qadr al-Ṣalāh (893), and al-Lālakā'i (1404), and it is authentic.
[245] al-Īmān by Ahmad (210), and it is authentic.
[246] Narrated by al-Tirmidhī (2622), this is a sound and authentic narration.
[247] Taʿẓīm Qadr al-Ṣalāh (978), the chain of narration is authentic.

He also said: “The scholars have unanimously agreed that whoever curses Allah, or curses His Messenger, or rejects anything revealed by Allah, or kills a prophet, while still acknowledging what Allah has revealed, is a disbeliever. Likewise, the one who abandons prayer until its time passes deliberately is a disbeliever.”[248]

Muhammad ibn Nasr (294 AH) stated: “We have mentioned the narrations from the Prophet ﷺ regarding declaring the one who abandons prayer as a disbeliever and expelling him from the community, and the permissibility of fighting those who refuse to establish prayer. Similar reports have come to us from the companions, and we have not received any contradiction on this matter.”[249]

Ibn Ḥazm (456 AH) stated: “It has been reported from Umar, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAwf, Muʿādh ibn Jabal, Abu Hurayrah, and others from the companions of the Prophet ﷺ that whoever abandons one obligatory prayer deliberately until its time expires is a disbeliever and an apostate.”[250]

Ḥāfiẓ ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq al-Ishbīlī (d. 581 AH) in his book al-Ṣalāh stated: “A group of the companions and those after them believed in the disbelief of the one who abandons the prayer deliberately until its time expires, including Umar ibn al-Khattāb, Muʿādh ibn Jabal, ʿAbd Allāh ibn Masʿūd, Ibn ʿAbbās, Jābir, and Abu al-Dardā, as well as others like Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal, Isḥāq ibn Rāhūya, ʿAbd Allāh ibn Mubārak, Ibrāhīm al-Nakhʿī, al-Ḥakam ibn ʿUtaybah, Ayūb al-Sakhtiyānī, Abū Dāwūd al-Ṭiyālsī, Abū Bakr ibn Abī Shaybah, and Zuhayr ibn Ḥarb.”

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[248] Taʿẓīm Qadr al-Ṣalāh (990)
[249] Taʿẓīm Qadr al-Ṣalāh (925)
[250] al-Muḥalla (15/2)

On the invalidity of attributing to the Imams the view that abandoning prayer out of laziness and neglect does not lead to disbelief

Many contemporary scholars attribute the view that abandoning prayer out of laziness or negligence does not constitute disbelief to the majority of scholars, specifically to Abu Ḥanīfa, Mālik, al-Shāfiʿī, and a narration from Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal.

Abu Ḥanīfa:

Abu Ḥanīfa al-Nuʿmān ibn Thābit, the Imām of the People of Opinion, he was considered to be from the scholars of the Murji'ah as he is amongst those who say that īmān is merely a statement and belief, and they exclude actions from the definition of īmān.

The view of not declaring the one who abandons prayer or other practical pillars of Islam to be a disbeliever is well-established from him. This is a position held by all the Murji'ah, as is clearly outlined in their foundational texts. Therefore, their stance cannot be used as evidence in this matter, since they contradict the Ahl al-Sunnah in the very essence of īmān. For the Murji'ah, a person is considered a complete believer if they merely speak with their tongue and believe with their heart, and actions of the limbs do not play a role in defining īmān.

Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr stated:: "The scholars of fiqh and ḥadīth have agreed that īmān is both a statement and action, and that no action is valid without intention, except for what has been mentioned about Abū Ḥanīfa and his companions, who believed that acts of worship do not qualify as īmān."[251]

Imām of Dār al-Hijrah, Mālik ibn Anas

He narrated in his Muwaṭṭaʾ the statement of the rightly guided Caliph ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb: "There is no share in Islam for one who abandons prayer." How then could he oppose that, when he rebuked those who preferred the statement of Ibrāhīm al-Nakhaʿī over that of ʿUmar, as mentioned earlier.

Ibn Abī Zayd al-Qayrawānī, a well-regarded imām among the Mālikīs who thoroughly collected and transmitted Mālik's opinions and was even nicknamed "the little Mālik," reported that Imām Mālik held the view that the one who abandons prayer is a disbeliever. Among what he cited:

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[251] al-Tamhīd (9/238)

Ibn al-Qāsim reported from Mālik: "Whoever abandons prayer is told, 'Pray.' If he prays, well and good. If not, he is to be killed. And whoever says, 'I will not pray,' is forced. If he prays, well and good. If not, he is to be killed. Likewise for someone who says, 'I will not perform ablution.'"[252]

And al-Qayrawānī stated (14/537): Ibn Ḥabīb said: "As for the one who abandons prayer, and when commanded by the imām to perform it says, 'I will not pray,' he is to be executed without delay, not even given time until the end of its prayer time. He is considered a disbeliever for abandoning it—whether due to rejection, neglect, carelessness, or laziness—because of the Prophet's statement: 'Between a man and disbelief is abandoning the prayer.' The same applies to the other pillars of Islam. If someone is brought to the ruler and says, "I do pray," he is left alone. If he returns to abandoning it, he is again commanded, and if he replies, "I pray," he is to be disciplined and punished harshly with beating and imprisonment until his repentance and adherence to prayer are evident. If he says upon being brought forward, "I will not pray," he is to be executed, even if he affirms its obligation but does not repent. He is not given a delay past the time of that prayer except until its final limit. This was also the view of Maṭraf, Ibn al-Mājishūn, Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, and Aṣbagh. It was narrated from Mālik in a general form by Ibn al-Qāsim and Maṭraf without detailed elaboration."[253]

Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr said: Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī al-Bajilī narrated: Yūnus ibn ʿAbd al-Aʿlā said: I heard Ibn Wahb say: Mālik said, "Whoever believes in Allah, affirms the messengers, and then refuses to pray—he is to be killed." This was also the view of Abū Thawr, all of the companions of al-Shāfiʿī, and it was the statement of Makḥūl, Ḥammād ibn Zayd, and Wakīʿ. Al-Ḥasan ibn Thawwāb reported: Abū ʿAbd Allāh [Imām Aḥmad] was asked about a man who said, "I am a believer and affirm that prayer is an obligatory duty upon me, but I do not pray." He replied: "He should be given three days to repent; if he prays, good. If not, he is to be killed."[254]

Al-Ṭaḥāwī said: "Some of the scholars who are well-versed in Mālik's views have stated: Among the positions of Mālik is that whoever abandons a prayer intentionally without excuse until its time has elapsed is an apostate (murtadd) and is to be killed unless he performs it. This is also the view of al-Shāfiʿī."[255]

This is a reliable report, transmitted from the second generation of Mālik's companions. It is more deserving of acceptance and adherence than later contradictory narrations.

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[252] al-Nawādir wa al-Ziyādāt (1/150)
[253] al-Nawādir wa al-Ziyādāt (14/537)
[254] al-Tamhīd (4/231)
[255] Mukhtaṣar Ikhtilāf al-ʿUlamāʾ (4/393

Al-Lālakāʾī (d. 418 AH) said:"A narration has been transmitted from the Prophet (peace be upon him) stating that prayer is part of faith. This was also narrated from the Companions such as ʿUmar and ʿAlī. Among the jurists who held this view were: Mālik, al-Awzāʿī, al-Shāfiʿī, Sharīk ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Nakhaʿī, Aḥmad, Isḥāq, Abū Thawr, and Abū ʿUbayd al-Qāsim ibn Sallām."[256]

Thus, it becomes clear that the attribution of the view that abandoning prayer does not amount to disbelief (takfīr) to Imām Mālik is false, and that what is firmly established from him is agreement with the consensus of the Companions.

Imām Muḥammad ibn Idrīs al-Shāfiʿī

Al-Muzanī (d. 264 AH), may Allah have mercy on him, said: Al-Shāfiʿī said: One who abandons the prayer until its time has passed without excuse is to be told: "No one can pray it on your behalf. If you pray, then good; otherwise, we will call you to repent (nastaṭībuka). If you repent, well and good; otherwise, we will kill you." Just as one who disbelieves is told: "If you believe, fine, otherwise we will kill you." And it has been said: He is given three days to repent; if he prays within that time, fine, otherwise he is to be killed—and this is a good approach, in shāʾ Allāh. Al-Muzanī said: Al-Shāfiʿī also said regarding the apostate (murtadd): "If he does not repent, he is to be executed, and three days are not to be waited for," due to the Prophet's saying: "Whoever changes his religion, kill him." He [al-Shāfiʿī] thus considered the one who abandons prayer without excuse to be like the one who abandons faith, and so the same ruling applies by analogy in his view. Therefore, there is no waiting period of three days."[257]

It was previously mentioned that al-Ṭaḥāwī, stated that it is from al-Shāfiʿī's views to judge the deliberate abandoner of prayer without excuse as an apostate[258], and that his punishment is execution. This agrees with what was narrated by al-Muzanī—especially since al-Ṭaḥāwī studied under his uncle al-Muzanī before later adopting the school of Ahl al-Raʾy (the rationalists).

al-Lālakāʾī stated in Iʿtiqād Ahl al-Sunnah (no. 1375) that declaring the one who abandons prayer a disbeliever was the view of the jurists, including al-Shāfiʿī.

Ibn Kathīr said: "There is disagreement regarding what is meant by 'abandoning the prayer' in this verse. Some said it means completely leaving it. This was the view of Muḥammad ibn Kaʿb al-Quraẓī, Ibn Zayd ibn Aslam, and al-Suddī, and it was favored by Ibn Jarīr. Based on this,

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[256] Sharḥ Uṣūl Iʿtiqād Ahl al-Sunnah (chapter 54)
[257] Mukhtaṣar al-Muzanī – Kitāb al-Umm 8/128
[258] Mukhtaṣar Ikhtilāf al-ʿUlamāʾ (4/393)

many of the early and later scholars, as well as some Imams—such as the well-known view of Imām Aḥmad and one narration from al-Shāfiʿī—held that the one who abandons the prayer is a disbeliever, based on the ḥadīth: 'Between a man and disbelief is the abandonment of prayer.'"[259]

What further confirms the correctness of attributing this position to this Imām (al-Shāfiʿī), may Allah have mercy on him, is what has been authentically narrated from him that īmān consists of three pillars, and that the īmān of a person is not valid unless all three are present. So what is the action without which īmān is not valid, according to Imām al-Shāfiʿī, if he did not regard the one who abandons prayer a disbeliever?

Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal

Some of the later scholars have attributed to Imām Aḥmad, the opinion of not declaring the one who abandons the prayer a kāfir, and they even count it as a valid narration in his madhhab! The statements of this Imām, that clearly declare the abandoner of prayer a disbeliever are so many and so well known that there can be no doubt—given their abundance—that Imām Aḥmad never differed in his ruling on this matter.

Imām Ahmad said In his Usūl as-Sunnah: And that Īmān is in speech and deeds. It increases and decreases, just as it has been narrated in the report: ‚The believers with the most complete Īmān, are those who have the best manner.' And: ‚The one who leaves the prayer he has verily committed kufr.' And there is nothing from the deeds where leaving it is kufr, except the prayer. Whoever leaves it, then he is kāfir, and Allāh has allowed killing him.

Ibn Hānī said: "I was present with a man in the company of Abū ʿAbd Allāh [Imām Aḥmad], and he kept asking him, saying: 'O Abū ʿAbd Allāh... and that no one is declared a disbeliever due to sin?' Abū ʿAbd Allāh replied: 'Be quiet. Whoever abandons the prayer has disbelieved.'"[260]

Imām Abū Bakr al-Khallāl said: Ismāʿīl ibn Saʿīd said: I asked Aḥmad about the saying of the Prophet ﷺ: "Whoever cheats us is not from us, and whoever carries arms against us is not from us." He said: It is for emphasis and stern warning, and I do not declare anyone a disbeliever except for abandoning the prayer."[261]

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[259] Tafsīr Ibn Kathir (5/243)
[260] al-Masāʾil (no. 1873)
[261] Masāʾil al-Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal – Riwayat Ismāʿīl ibn Saʿīd al-Shālanjī p.89

al-ʿAbbās ibn Muḥammad al-Yamāmī said in Ṭarsūs: “I asked Abū ʿAbd Allāh about the ḥadīth attributed to the Prophet ﷺ: ‘No one among the people of tawḥīd is declared a disbeliever due to sin.’ He replied: ‘It is fabricated, has no basis. What about the ḥadīth of the Prophet ﷺ: Whoever abandons the prayer has disbelieved?’” Then he was asked: “Is he inherited from due to belonging to the same religion (millah)?” He said: “He does not inherit, nor is he inherited from.”[262]

al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī al-Iskāfī said: Abū ʿAbd Allāh [Aḥmad] said regarding the one who abandons prayer: I only know it according to the apparent wording of the ḥadīth. As for interpreting it as disbelief only if accompanied by denial, we do not know it that way. And ʿUmar, may Allah be pleased with him, said when he was reminded of prayer: There is no share in Islam for the one who abandons the prayer.[263]

Abū ʿAbd Allāh said: We have not heard that the abandonment of any deed constitutes disbelief except for prayer.[264]

Abū Bakr al-Marwadhī said: “I asked Abū ʿAbd Allāh about a man who abandons the prayer out of disrespect and frivolity. He said: Glory be to Allah! If he abandons it out of disrespect and frivolity, then what is left?! I said: He drinks and behaves sinfully. He said: Is this what you want to ask about? The Prophet said: Between the servant and disbelief is the abandonment of prayer. I said: Should he be asked to repent? I repeated the question. He said: If he abandons it out of disrespect and frivolity, then what is left?!”[265]

Abū al-Ḥārith asked Abū ʿAbd Allāh: Is he a disbeliever for abandoning prayer? He said: The Prophet said: Between the servant and disbelief is the abandonment of prayer. I said: Suppose a man was known for praying regularly, then he stops and is told to pray, but he says: “I won’t,” though he doesn’t deny that prayer is obligatory. He said: The Prophet said: Whoever abandons prayer has disbelieved.”[266]

Abū Dāwūd said: I heard Aḥmad say: If a man says, “I will not pray,” then he is a disbeliever.”[267]

Ismāʿīl ibn Saʿīd said: I asked Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal about the one who deliberately abandons prayer.

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[262] Aḥkām Ahl al-Milal by al-Khallāl (1368)
[263] Aḥkām Ahl al-Milal by al-Khallāl [1370]
[264] Aḥkām Ahl al-Milal by al-Khallāl [1372]
[265] Aḥkām Ahl al-Milal by al-Khallāl [1374]
[266] Aḥkām Ahl al-Milal by al-Khallāl [1375]
[267] Aḥkām Ahl al-Milal by al-Khallāl [1377])

He said: No one is declared a disbeliever due to a sin except the one who abandons the prayer deliberately. If he delays one prayer until the time of the next, he is given three days to repent."[268]

If you seek further elaboration, refer to the chapters al-Khallāl devoted to this topic in his book al-Jāmiʿ li-Aḥkām Ahl al-Milal ([2/535] "Chapter: Whoever Abandons the Prayer has Disbelieved") and ([2/541] "Chapter: A Man Abandons the Prayer Until Its Time Passes").

Ibn Taymiyyah said): "Likewise, the followers of the four madhāhib and others—especially as many of them have adopted some foundational theological positions (uṣūl) and mixed them with their own. The Ḥanbalī, Shāfiʿī, and Mālikī might mix into the madhhab of Mālik, al-Shāfiʿī, and Aḥmad something from the uṣūl of the Ashʿarīs, Sālimīs, and others—and attribute it to their madhhab."[269]

[268] Taʿẓīm Qadr al-Ṣalāh [978])
[269] Minhāj al-Sunnah ([5/261]

Response to those who use ambiguous text to argue against takfir of the one who abandons the prayer

The Murji'ah are not content with clear authentic reports, nor the statements of the ṣaḥābah and tabi'in. Instead they resorted to using ambiguous statements to justify themselves.

Many of these reports are not authentic or soundly attributed to the prophet ﷺ. As for that which are; either they are not explicit or they are general, such as the narrations of intercession etc. the companions who narrated these reports affirmed takfir of the one who abandons the prayer.

As for the Tābiʿīn, both Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī and Isḥāq ibn Rāhawayh have reported their consensus in agreement with that of the Companions. No contrary view has been reported from them, except what is attributed by Muḥammad ibn Naṣr al-Marwazī, with his isnād from Ibn Shihāb:

He was asked about a man who abandons prayer, and he said: "If he left it due to inventing a religion other than Islam, he is killed. If it is only due to sinfulness (fisq), then he is severely beaten and imprisoned."[270]

This report falls under the category of the mutashābih (ambiguous), which must be referred back to the muḥkam (clear) until its correct interpretation is clarified. Ibn Shihāb did not explicitly say in this narration that someone who abandons prayer out of negligence is not a disbeliever, and it can easily be harmonized—without forcing the text—with the position of the majority of scholars. Thus, it is not valid to abandon the clear, authentic, and explicit statements of the Qurʾān, Sunnah, and the consensus of the Companions and Tābiʿīn based on a single statement that is ambiguous and not definitive. The people of innovation and deviation tend to cling on to ambiguous statement and avoid the clear.

Imām al-Dārimī said: "The one who seeks to deviate from the truth follows the anomalous opinions of scholars and clings to their slips, while the one who seeks the truth in himself follows the well-known positions of the majority and aligns with the general body of scholars. These are two clear signs by which one can distinguish a follower of truth from an innovator."[271]

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[270] Taʿẓīm Qadr al-Ṣalāh (1035)
[271] al-Radd ʿalā al-Jahmiyyah (p. 108)

What is truly strange is that some, despite claiming to follow the way of the Salaf, harshly denounce those who uphold the clear texts from the Qur'an and Sunnah and the consensus of the Companions—going so far as to accuse them of deviated creeds or align them with the Khawārij!

Ibn Taymiyyah said: "As for those who do not declare the one who abandons prayer to be a disbeliever, they have no evidence except that which is applicable to the one who denies it, just as it applies to the one who abandons it. Therefore, their response to the denier is the same as their response to the one who abandons the prayer. However, the texts have connected disbelief with turning away from it, as mentioned previously. This is similar to their use of general texts which the Murji'ah use to argue, such as: "Whoever testifies that there is no god but Allah, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and that ʿĪsā is the servant and messenger of Allah and His word that He gave to Maryam..." and similar texts.

The strongest proof they rely on is the statement of the Prophet ﷺ: "Five prayers that Allah has prescribed upon the servants during the day and night. Whoever preserves them has a covenant with Allah that He will admit him to Paradise, and whoever does not preserve them has no covenant with Allah; He may punish him or admit him to Paradise." They said: "He has placed the one who does not preserve them under the will of Allah, and a disbeliever is not under His will." However, this has no evidence. The promise is attached to preserving them, and preservation of them means performing them at their prescribed times, as commanded. As Allah says: "Preserve the prayers, especially the middle prayer" (Al-Baqarah: 238). Failure to preserve them means performing them after their time, just as the Prophet ﷺ delayed the Asr prayer on the day of the Battle of the Trench, and Allah revealed the verse commanding preservation of the prayers and others like it.

Allah also said: "And there came after them successors who neglected the prayer and followed their desires, so they will meet evil." (Maryam: 59). Ibn Masʿūd and others were asked: "What is meant by neglecting it?" He replied: "Delaying it beyond its time." They said: "We only thought it meant leaving it altogether." He said: "If they had left it, they would have been disbelievers." Similarly, Allah says: "Woe to those who pray, but are heedless of their prayer" (Al-Maʿūn: 4-5), criticizing them even though they pray, because they neglect the required actions of prayer, such as performing it at the correct time and completing its obligatory actions. As it was narrated in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim from the Prophet ﷺ: "That is the prayer of the hypocrite. He waits until the sun is between the horns of Shayṭān, then stands up and prays four rakʿahs, barely remembering Allah in them." He declared this to be the prayer of the hypocrites because they delayed it beyond its time and hastily performed it.

It is also established in Ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth that the Prophet ﷺ spoke of the rulers after him who would do things that were wrong, and they said, "O Messenger of Allah, should we fight them?" He replied: "No, as long as they pray." He also said: "There will be rulers who delay the prayer beyond its time, so pray the prayer at its time, and then perform your prayer with them as an additional prayer." This indicates that the Prophet ﷺ only allowed fighting against them if they did not pray. He also clarified that they delayed the prayer beyond its time, which indicates that they neglected preserving it, not that they abandoned it altogether. If one understands the difference between these two situations, the Prophet ﷺ included under the will of Allah those who did not preserve the prayer, not those who abandoned it entirely. The act of preserving the prayer implies that they prayed but did not preserve it properly, and it does not apply to those who completely abandoned it. For if it did, they would be killed as disbelievers without a doubt.

It is not conceivable that a man who believes in his heart, acknowledges that Allah has made prayer obligatory, adheres to the Shari'ah of the Prophet ﷺ, and is commanded by the ruler to pray, would refuse until he is killed, and yet remain a believer inwardly. Such a person would not be anything but a disbeliever. If he says: "I believe in its obligation but will not perform it," this statement, in this case, would be a lie, just as if he were to throw the Qur'ān in the trash and say: "I testify that what is in it is the word of Allah," or if he were to kill one of the Prophets and say: "I testify that he is the Messenger of Allah." Such actions would contradict the belief in the heart. Therefore, if he says: "I believe in my heart but do not act accordingly," he would be lying in what he claims.

This matter requires deep reflection. Whoever understands the connection between the outward and inward will be free from doubt in this issue. They will realize that those jurists who say that if one acknowledges the obligation but refuses to perform it, they should not be killed or should be killed while still considered a Muslim, have fallen into the same doubt that affected the Murji'ah and Jahmiyyah, and they have taken the same approach as those who claim that decisive will, along with full ability, does not necessarily lead to action.

This is why the jurists who refrain from declaring such a person to be killed base their stance on their position regarding "the issue of faith," claiming that actions are not part of faith. Yet we have already shown that actions are a necessary consequence of faith in the heart. Complete faith in the heart without any outward actions is impossible, whether the outward acts are considered a necessary part of faith or not, as we have previously explained."[272]

We see IbnTaymiyyah himself state the one who doesn't takfir the one who abandons prayer to be influenced by the doubts of the Murji'ah and so did Ibn Rajab.

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[272] Majmū al-Fatāwā by Ibn Taymiyyah 7/613-616

He said, while discussing the issue of takfīr (declaring disbelief) upon the one who abandons prayer: "And this was transmitted by Isḥāq ibn Rāhūyah as a consensus among them, to the point that he considered the statement of those who say that abandoning these pillars (of Islam) without denial does not constitute disbelief—he considered it to be from the sayings of the Murjiʾah."[273]

And Ḥarb reported from Isḥāq (ibn Rāhūyah) in his al-Sunnah, who said: "The Murjiʾah have gone to extremes until some of them say that there are people who abandon the prescribed prayers, fasting of Ramaḍān, zakāh, ḥajj, and the majority of obligations without denying them, yet they still say: 'We do not declare them disbelievers; their matter is left to Allah, so long as they affirm them.' These are the Murjiʾah—there is no doubt about it." End quote.

And this is similar to what was said by Ibn al-Mubārak (may Allah have mercy on him). Ibn Maʿīn (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "'Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak was told: 'These people (meaning the Murjiʾah) say that whoever does not fast or pray, while affirming its obligation, is still a complete believer.' Ibn al-Mubārak said: 'We do not say as they do. Whoever deliberately abandons prayer without excuse until the time of one prayer enters into the next, then he is a disbeliever.'"[274]

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[273] Fatḥ al-Bārī by Ibn Rajab (1/21)
[274] Taʿẓīm Qadr al-Ṣalāh (982)

Meaning of Irjāʾ in the language

Abū Muḥammad ibn Durustawayh ibn al-Marzubān (d. 337 AH) said: "Al-Irjāʾ means: delay or postponement in all things. Among its usages is the saying of Allah the Exalted: 'You may defer (turjī) whom you will of them and receive whom you will' [al-Aḥzāb: 51]. The Murjiʾah are a group among the Muslims with an innovated doctrine. Their statement is that 'faith is statement without action.' Thus, they deferred action—that is, they postponed it. Some Arabs say: 'arjaītu al-amr irjāʾan' (with a yāʾ instead of a hamza), which is a known dialect and used among the common people. It may either be a softening of the hamza or derived from 'rajā al-biʾr' (the edge of a well), and the plural arjāʾ means the outer areas or edges of anything."[275]

Al-Azharī (d. 370 AH) said: "Irjāʾ is sometimes vocalized with a hamza and sometimes without. Ibn al-Sikkīt said: 'It is said: arjaʾtu al-amr and arjaytuhu when you postpone or delay it.' Allah said: 'And others are deferred for the command of Allah' [al-Tawbah: 106]. And it is recited also as murjiʿūn. And in another verse: 'Postpone him and his brother' [al-Aʿrāf: 111], and it is also recited as arjaʾthu. It is said: 'This is a man who is murjāʾ,' and 'they are the Murjiʾah' or if you wish: 'Marj,' and 'they are the Marjiʾah.'"[276]

Ibn Qutaybah (d. 276 AH) said: "As for the Murjiʾah, the term can be pronounced with a hamza or without. It is derived from arjaʾtu something, meaning: I delayed it. Allah the Almighty said: 'You may defer whom you will of them' [al-Aḥzāb: 51], and this is read both with and without a hamza. They were named thus because they claimed that faith is merely a statement, and they 'postponed' action—that is, they detached it from faith."[277]
Ibn Fāris (d. 395 AH) said: "As for the form with a hamza, it indicates delay. It is said: arjaʾtu al-shayʾ—I delayed the thing. Allah said: 'You may defer whom you will of them'. From this the Murjiʾah are named."[278]

Abū Mūsā al-Madanī (d. 581 AH) said: "The Murjiʾah—some say the name is derived from arjaʾa amran and committing major sins. That is because Allah, Blessed and Exalted, has 'deferred' (arjaʾa) punishing them or forgiving them."[279]

A Benefit

Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā said: "Isḥāq ibn Rāhūyah was asked: Why were the Murjiʾah called by that name?" He replied: 'Because they do not refer sins to Allah (i.e., they do not attribute their

[275] Taṣḥīḥ al-Faṣīḥ wa Sharḥuhu (p. 184)
[276] Tahdhīb al-Lughah (11/125)
[277] Gharīb al-Ḥadīth (3/253)
[278] Maqāyīs al-Lughah (2/495)
[279] al-Majmūʿ al-Mughīth (1/744)

consequences to His judgment); rather, they say the believer is forgiven and destined for Paradise, while others refer the matter of sins to Allah's will.' So it was said to Isḥāq: Then why were they called Murji'ah if they do not defer sins to Allah, the Exalted? He said: Al-Naḍr ibn Shumayl said: 'They were called by that name because they said the opposite of what the name implies—just like the Ḥākimiyyah (those who claim "No judgment but Allah's") who contradict it in practice, or the Qadariyyah (those who deny divine predestination) despite their claim to it. Similarly, if someone denies land, he may be called "an Ardiyy" (land-affiliated).'"[280]

[280] al-Sunnah by al-Khallāl (1081)

On the Reasons for the Spread of the Murji'ah Doctrine

There are several key reasons behind the spread and popularity of the Murji'ah doctrine among people, the most important of which include:

Strong aversion to the doctrine of the Khawarij, which led some people to adopt the opposite extreme.

The involvement of certain ascetics, worshippers, and notable jurists in this sect, and their active promotion of the doctrine.

Al-Mughīrah said: "There remained a group upon the truth until 'Amr ibn Murrah (d. 116 AH) adopted Irjā', and then the people began to fall into it en masse."[281]

[281] Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā', 5/198

Regarding the Murji'at al-Fuqahā'

They were Dominant in kufa. Scholars of hadith used the title "Faqih" (Jurist) for someone who follows the sunnah and athar.

Sufyan al-Thawri said: "The jurists used to say: A statement is not valid unless it is acted upon; and a statement and action are not valid unless accompanied by intention; and all three — statement, action, and intention — are not valid unless they conform to the Sunnah."[282]

Al-Hasan said: "The true jurist is one who is devoted in worship, ascetic in worldly life, and firmly upon the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ."[283]

Wahb ibn Munabbih said: "The true jurist is chaste and committed to the Sunnah — such are the followers of the prophets in every era."[284]

<u>Among those who referred to those accused of holding Murji'ah beliefs as jurists was</u>

Abu 'Ubayd al-Qasim ibn Sallam (d. 224 AH) — In his book Kitab al-īmān, under the section on al-istithnā' (saying "I am a believer, insha'Allah"), he said: "We also regard as the view of the jurists those who would state belief without making an exception. They would say: 'We are believers,' and among them were: Abu 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sulami, Ibrahim al-Taymi, 'Awn ibn 'Abdullah, and those who came after them, such as 'Umar ibn Dharr, al-Salt ibn Bahram, and Mis'ar ibn Kidam, and those who followed their path."[285]

istithnā' is a milder deviation compared to those who excluded actions from īmān and those that claimed a sinner's īmān is similar to Jibrīl . The Jahmiyyah did not emerge until late 2nd century, so early scholars who spoke of Murji'ah were talking about the Jurists not the Jahmiyyah.

Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah said: "Ḥammād ibn Abī Sulaymān and those who followed him denied the varying levels of imān, the inclusion of actions within it, and the permissibility of making istithnā' when speaking about one's Imān (i.e., saying "I am a believer, if Allah wills"). These are known as the Murji'at al-Fuqahā'.

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[282] al-Ibanah al-Kubra (1185)
[283] Ibtal al-Hiyal (59)
[284] Ibtal al-Hiyal (62)
[285] Kitab al-īmān by Abu 'Ubayd al-Qasim ibn Sallam (52)

As for Ibrāhīm al-Nakhaʿī — the Imāms of the people of Kūfah and teacher of Ḥammād ibn Abī Sulaymān — and those like him, as well as his predecessors from the companions of Ibn Masʿūd, such as ʿAlqamah and al-Aswad, they were among the strongest in opposing the Murji'ah. They used to make istithnā' in statements about Imān.

However, Ḥammād ibn Abī Sulaymān deviated from the path of his predecessors, and others followed him. This view then spread among various groups from Kūfah and those who came after them. **The Salaf and the leading scholars strongly denounced these individuals, considered them innovators, and severely criticized them**."[286]

Abū Ismāʿīl al-Harawī al-Anṣārī said: "īmān (īmān) in its entirety is belief (taṣdīq); the heart believes what the messengers have brought, the tongue affirms what is in the heart, and actions affirm the statement—just as it is said: 'His actions confirmed his words.'
This is exemplified in the saying of the Prophet ﷺ: 'The eyes commit adultery, and their adultery is the gaze; the ears commit adultery, and their adultery is listening; the hands commit adultery, and their adultery is touching; the feet commit adultery, and their adultery is walking; the heart desires and wishes, and the private parts either confirm all that or deny it.' Belief (taṣdīq) is used both for statements and for willful intent, as in: 'So-and-so is sincere in resolve,' or 'sincere in love,' or 'they launched a true and determined attack.'"[287]

īmān, according to Ahl al-Sunnah, is not mere belief as the people of innovation from the Murji'ah and their various sects claim. As Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said in his book al-Ṣalāh (p. 71): "īmān is not merely belief, as has been previously explained. Rather, it is belief that necessarily entails obedience and submission."

He also said (p. 66): "Belief is only complete with two components: First: conviction in truth. Second: the heart's love and submission. That is why Allah said to Ibrāhīm: 'You have fulfilled the vision' [al-Ṣāffāt: 105]. Ibrāhīm had already believed in the truth of the vision from the moment he saw it, since the dreams of prophets are revelation. However, Allah only described him as having believed in it after he acted upon what he was commanded. Likewise, the Prophet said: 'The private part confirms or denies all that.' So, he made the act of the private part the real confirmation—not the wish of the heart. The denial is its abstaining from that act. This clearly shows that belief is not valid without action."

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[286] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/507)
[287] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/555)

As for the difference between the view of Ahl al-Sunnah and that of the Jahmiyyah and Ashʿarīs , who say that īmān is merely belief, Abū al-Qāsim al-Aṣbahānī—known as Qiwām al-Sunnah—said:

"Īmān, in the Sharīʿah, refers to all inward and outward acts of obedience. The Ashʿarīs say: Īmān is merely belief, while actions and statements are among its branches, not part of īmān itself. The benefit of this disagreement is that—according to Ahl al-Sunnah—whoever neglects actions and commits prohibitions is not unconditionally labeled a 'believer.' Rather, it is said: his īmān is deficient because he neglected a part of it. Whereas, according to them (the Ashʿarīs), he is still called a believer without qualification, because they define īmān as belief, which he has fulfilled."[288]

Ibn Taymiyyah explained in his Majmūʿ: "Even if we assume that īmān in the language means taṣdīq (belief), it is known that īmān is not belief in just anything—it is belief in something specific, namely, what the Messenger (peace be upon him) conveyed. Thus, īmān as understood in the terminology of the Sharīʿah is more specific than linguistic īmān."[289]

[288] al-Ḥujjah fī Bayān al-Maḥajjah (1/403)
[289] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/127)

Reason for association between Murji'ah and Qadariyyah in hadith and reports

Qadariyyah here refers to those who affirm qadr and use it as argument, opposing the command of Allah, not the early Qadariyyah who denied Allah's knowledge and rejected qadr.

Ibn Taymiyyah said, when referring to those who use divine decree as an excuse to abandon obligations and commit prohibitions: "The transmitted reports condemning the Qadariyyah apply more strongly to these than to those who deny divine decree, since the former weaken the command of Allah regarding īmān and righteousness, and so they are often mentioned together with the Murji'ah. The Murji'ah weaken the matter of īmān and divine threat, and likewise these Qadariyyah weaken Allah's command and warning. Whoever does this is cursed in every divine law, as it was reported: 'The Qadariyyah and the Murji'ah are cursed on the tongues of seventy prophets.'"[290]

Those who speak falsely about divine decree fall into three categories:
1.Those who deny it altogether.
2.Those who reject divine command and prohibition by it.
3.Those who criticize the Lord for combining command and decree — and these are the worst of the groups.

irjā' ' weakens belief in divine threat and diminishes the seriousness of obligations and prohibitions. And if the Qadarī uses divine decree as a justification, he becomes a supporter of the Murji'ī. But if he denies divine decree, then he and the Murji'ī stand opposed—one goes to an extreme in negating the need for seeking Allah's help in obeying Him, and the other goes to the opposite extreme.

[290] Minhāj al-Sunnah (3/82)

Murji'ah say: actions are parts of the sharā'iʿ (laws) of islam not īmān

Ḥarb al-Kirmānī said: The Murji'ah are those who claim that īmān is a statement without action, and that īmān is merely a statement, while actions are part of the laws (sharā'iʿ).[291]

Qiwām al-Sunnah al-Aṣbahānī said: "In the Sharīʿah, īmān refers to all acts of obedience, both inward and outward. The Ashʿarīs said: "īmān is belief (taṣdīq), and the actions and statements are among its laws, not part of īmān itself."[292]

Significant difference, according to those who include action in the definition of īmān, whoever neglects or commits prohibition is not a believer in an absolute sense. **He is deficient in his īmān**. According to Ashʿarīs they are believers in the absolute sense since īmān is belief alone. Ibn al-Bannā' said in al-Uṣūl al-Mujarradah (p. 65): Contrary to the Ashʿarīs , who say that īmān is "belief" both in the Sharīʿah and the language, and **that actions and words are from its laws, not from īmān itself.**

What the Murji'ah means by saying "actions are laws" is - **they are religious obligations imposed by Allah not part of īmān. A person is a complete believer without action and only sound and belief.**

In defence of their view they distort the hadith of Jibrīl . Some of them narrate it with added phrases like "Tell me the laws of Islam" instead of "Tell me about Islam".

Al-ʿUqaylī narrated the long ḥadīth of Jibrīl through ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Abī Rawwād—one of the Imāms of the Murji'ah—who altered the wording to support the Murji'ah view. He narrated it with the phrase: "Then he said: What are the laws of Islam?" He replied: "To establish prayer, give zakāh, perform ḥajj..." and so on.[293]

Al-ʿUqaylī said: This is how he narrated it: "laws of Islam." Abū Ḥanīfah and Jarrāḥ ibn al-Ḍaḥḥāk followed him in this phrase, and these are Murji'ah.

Imām Muslim said:"As for the narration of Abū Sinān from ʿAlqamah in the text of this ḥadīth, wherein it is stated that Jibrīl said: 'I came to ask you about the Sharā'iʿ al-Islām (rites of Islam),' this is an additional wording that is anomalous and has no basis in the authentic versions. This phrasing was inserted into the narration by a small group who introduced it as an

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[291] As-Sunnah by Ḥarb al-Kirmānī (92)
[292] al-Ḥujjah fī Bayān al-Maḥajjah (1/403)
[293] al-Ḍuʿafā' (3367)

addition—such as Ḍarīb al-Nuʿmān ibn Thābit [i.e., Abū Ḥanīfah], Saʿīd ibn Sinān, and those who inclined toward their view of irjāʾ . They only intended by this to support their opinion regarding īmān and to reinforce the doctrine of irjāʾ , but this addition only increased their position in weakness and their distance from the truth, for they inserted into the ḥadīths what the scholars of knowledge deemed unacceptable."[294]

Ibn Rajab said: "The ḥadīth of Ibn ʿUmar — 'Islam is built on five' — is used as evidence that when a name encompasses multiple elements, the name does not cease to apply if one of the elements is missing. This invalidates the claim of those who say: 'If actions are part of īmān , then īmān would cease by the loss of any of them.' The Prophet (peace be upon him) made these five the pillars of Islam and explained Islam with them in the ḥadīth of Jibrīl and the ḥadīth of Ṭalḥah ibn ʿUbayd Allāh, where a Bedouin asked about Islam and the Prophet explained it with these five. Yet, those who disagree say: if one of these aspects (apart from the two testimonies) is missing, the person still remains a Muslim. Some have narrated that Jibrīl asked the Prophet about the Sharāʾiʿ al-Islām rather than al-Islām itself. This wording has not been authenticated by the scholars of ḥadīth and their critics — among them Abū Zurʿah al-Rāzī, Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj, Abū Jaʿfar al-ʿUqaylī, and others."[295]

Ibn Taymiyyah said, describing the differing views of the sects concerning major sinners: "The second group are those who say that the īmān of such individuals remains as it was and does not decrease — based on their claim that īmān is merely firm conviction and belief, which they argue has not changed. They say only the Sharāʾiʿ al-Islām have decreased. This is the view of the Murji'ah, Jahmiyyah, and those who follow their path. But it is a view that contradicts the Qurʾān , Sunnah, and the consensus of the early generations."[296]

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[294] al-Tamyīz (p. 199)
[295] Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm wa-l-Ḥikam (1/151)
[296] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (6/671)

Murji'ah say actions are fruits of īmān

The Early Murji'ah, especially Murji'at al-Fuqahā' did not differ from Ahl As-Sunnah in acknowledging righteous actions are among the fruits of true īmān. The Disagreement lies among the status of these actions within īmān. **Whether actions are essential and inseparable or whether they are a perfection and fruit of īmān, such that īmān is valid without them**.

Ahl As-Sunnah by ijmāʿ agree actions are fruits of genuine īmān, a necessary requirement and essential part of it. **īmān is not valid – when the ability is present – without actions.**

The Murji'ah– across all their sects – though they say actions are fruits of īmān, **they differ by not considering these fruits as a necessary condition for the validity and acceptance of a person's īmān**, even if one abandons action altogether.

Ibn Taymiyyah said: "The Murji'ah —both their theologians and jurists—say that actions may be called īmān metaphorically, because action is the fruit of īmān and its implication, and because it is an indicator of it."[297]

He also said, while listing the errors of the Murji'ah : "One of their misconceptions is the belief that the īmān in the heart can be complete without any of the external actions. That's why they consider actions to be merely the fruit and consequence of īmān—like an effect caused by its cause—without considering them necessary to it."[298]

He further clarified: "When one says, 'Acts of obedience are the fruits of inward affirmation (taṣdīq),' this can mean two things:

That these acts are necessary consequences of it—i.e., whenever inward īmān exists, these acts exist as well. This is the position of the Salaf and Ahl al-Sunnah.

That inward īmān may be the cause, and yet it can be complete while the acts are absent. This is the view of the Murji'ah —both the Jahmiyyah and others."[299]

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[297]Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/159)
[298]Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/204)
[299]Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/363)

He pointed out three critical errors in their view:

First: Assuming that inward **īmān can be complete without the heart's actions—like love of Allah, fear of Him, reliance upon Him, and longing to meet Him.**

Second: Assuming that īmān in the heart **can be complete without any outward actions**—this is common to all Murji'ah .

Third: Claiming that **everyone whom the Sharīʿah has declared a disbeliever is only so because of a denial in the heart.** Many later scholars couldn't distinguish between the views of the Salaf and those of the Murji'ah and Jahmiyyah, because these views were often blended together in the speech of those who, inwardly, held Murji'ah and Jahmiyyah views, while outwardly showing respect for the Salaf and Ahl al-ḥadīth. Thus, they imagined that both positions could be reconciled.

He also said: "When we say that actions are among the fruits of īmān—if they are truly the result of īmān in the heart, and not of hypocrisy—it must then be that īmān itself either necessitates them or depends on another factor.

If īmān itself necessitates them, then they are inherently tied to it and inseparable from it, which is what is required. But if their existence depends on some other factor, then īmān would only be a part of the cause, and the actions would be the result of the other part—whereas in truth, the actions result from both. So it becomes clear that outward righteous actions are not the fruit of inward īmān unless that inward īmān necessitates and brings them about. In that case, what causes something must accompany it, and what results from a cause cannot be separated from it.

If the required outward actions are missing, then there must be a deficiency in the īmān within the heart. Thus, it is impossible to imagine complete inward īmān without the outward obligatory actions. Full īmān of the heart necessitates full external action, just as any deficiency in one reflects a deficiency in the other. To suppose a complete cause without its effect, or a full reason without its outcome, is impossible."[300]

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[300]Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/581)

Murji'ah agreed with jahmiyyah in removing actions of the heart from īmān.

At-Ṭaḥāwī (d. 321 AH) said in his ʿAqīdah Ṭaḥāwīyyah – īmān is one and its people are equal in its origin with differentiation among them based on fear and piety.

At-Ṭaḥāwī included fear and piety, which are actions of heart, in the differentiation of īmān, this is due to, for the Murji'ah, actions not being part of īmān. To them, īmān does not involve differentiation among people and **their differences only lie in outward actions that are external to īmān.**

Ibn Taymiyyah said while discussing the Murji'ah: "They said that the īmān of creation is the same, not differing. The only difference lies in the actions, which are external to īmān. They say that actions are not part of īmān."[301]

He also said, addressing a mistake made by the Murji'ah: "They mistakenly think that the īmān in the heart is nothing but mere affirmation without the actions of the heart, as was stated by the Jahmiyya Murji'ah."[302]

To the Murji'at al-Fuqahā', īmān is speech and belief. According to both them and Jahmiyyah, **actions of the heart are not part of īmān like action of the limbs**. A person can affirm with their tongue and heart **yet dislike what Allah revealed, and they will not be considered disbelievers**.

Ibn Taymiyyah stated: "The Murji'ah who said īmān is the affirmation of the heart and the statement of the tongue, and that actions are not part of it, came from a group of the scholars and worshippers of Kūfa. Their view was not like that of Jahm, for they knew that a person cannot be considered a believer unless they speak the testimony of īmān with the tongue when able to do so. They knew that Iblīs, Pharaoh, and others were disbelievers even though they believed in their hearts. But, since they did not include the actions of the heart in īmān , they ended up agreeing with Jahm's view. If they did include them, they would also have to include the actions of the limbs, as they are an essential part of īmān. However, these scholars had valid religious evidence, which made the matter unclear for them."[303]

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[301]Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (18/271)
[302]Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/204)
[303] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/194)

Murji'ah consider people equal in īmān - īmān of sinful is same as obedient

When the Murji'ah removed actions from īmān and defined it as verbal declaration - like the Murji'at al-Fuqahā' - or knowledge – like the Jahmiyyah– this leads to the conclusion īmān is the same as all people. They all participate in declaration and affirmation and **there is no difference between one who speaks or believes, only difference is action which they remove from īmān.**

Al-Fuḍayl ibn 'Iyāḍ said: "The people of innovation say that īmān is affirmation without action, and that īmān is one. The people only differ in actions, not in īmān."[304]

Abu 'Abdullāh al-Zubayrī said in his explanation of īmān and Islam and the naming of sects and refuting them (6): "A group of people claim that īmān is just speech without action, that it neither increases nor decreases. They say that whoever believes and does good, is just and honest, and acts with righteousness and fairness, then he is a believer. But if someone speaks the testimony of īmān , yet neglects the obligations, does not follow the prescribed acts, or avoids good actions, then he is also considered the same as the first. Both are in the same rank, with no distinction. This view is absurd when stated, and anyone who advocates it should not be followed."

Ibn Taymiyyah criticized this, saying: "The early scholars strongly opposed the Murji'a when they excluded actions from īmān, asserting that the īmān of all people is the same. Without a doubt, their view that all people's īmān is equal is one of the most severe mistakes. People do not have the same degree of belief, nor do they share the same love, fear, or knowledge. They differ in many aspects."[305]

They explicitly state their īmān is the same as Jibrīl or Abu Bakr's īmān is the same as the wickedest of people.

Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sarūjī – a companion of Waki' in his travels and pilgrimage, and a narrator from Ḥammad ibn Zayd and other Basri scholars – reported that Waki' said: "A group of scholars gathered in a house in Kūfa: Sharīk, Ibn Abī Laylā, al-Thawrī, Ibn Ḥayy, and Abū Ḥanīfa. Four of them, excluding Abū Ḥanīfa, said: 'We are believers as Allah has named us believers in His Book, upon this belief we marry and inherit. If we are punished, it is because of our sins; and if we are forgiven, it is due to His mercy.'

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[304] As-Sunnah of 'Abdullāh ibn Aḥmad (793)
[305] Majmū' al-Fatāwā (7/556)

Abū Ḥanīfa said: ‘Your belief is not the same as theirs. His belief (of those who say this) is like the belief of Jibrīl , even if he married his mother!’ Some of them said: ‘He should be expelled from Kūfa,’ and others said: ‘He should be punished with the legal limit (ḥadd).’ Sharīk refused to accept his testimony, as did his companions. Al-Thawrī did not speak to him until his death, and whenever he encountered him on the road, he would turn his face away from him.”[306]

Waki‘ ibn al-Jarāḥ also narrated: “Ibn Abī Laylā, al-Ḥasan ibn Ṣāliḥ, Sufyān al-Thawrī, and Sharīk ibn ‘Abdullāh sent for Abū Ḥanīfa and asked him: ‘What do you say about someone who marries his mother, kills his father, and drinks alcohol in his vessels?’ He replied: ‘He is a believer.’ Ibn Abī Laylā said: ‘I will never accept your testimony again.’ Al-Ḥasan ibn Ṣāliḥ said: ‘It is forbidden for me to look at your face from now on.’ Sharīk said: ‘If I had any authority, I would strike off your neck.’ Al-Thawrī said: ‘Your words are forever forbidden for me.’”[307]

Abū Isḥāq al-Fazārī said: “Abū Ḥanīfa used to say that the īmān of Iblīs and the īmān of Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq are the same.” Abū Bakr says: “My Lord.” Iblīs says: “My Lord.”

Abū Isḥāq said: “Anyone from the Murji’a who does not say this will contradict his own words.”[308]

Mubārak ibn Ḥasan said: “I asked Sālim al-Afṭas, who was from the Murji’ah: ‘A man obeys Allah and does not disobey, and another man disobeys Allah. The obedient man enters Paradise, and the disobedient man enters Hell. Do they differ in īmān?’ He said: ‘No.’”[309]

Isḥāq ibn Muḥammad narrated: “I was with Mālik ibn Anas and heard Ḥammad ibn Abī Ḥanīfa say to Mālik: ‘O Abā ‘Abdullāh, we have an opinion that we would like to present to you. If you find it correct, we will proceed with it; if you do not, we will refrain.’

Mālik replied: ‘What is it?’ Ḥammad said: ‘We do not declare anyone to be a disbeliever because of a sin. All people are Muslims.’ Mālik said: ‘This is excellent, this is not an issue.’

Then, Dāwūd ibn Abī Zunbur, Ibrāhīm ibn Ḥabīb, and his companions stood up and approached Mālik, saying: ‘O Abā ‘Abdullāh, this man says the view of the Murji’a, that īmān is like the īmān of the angels.’

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[306] Al-Kāmil fi al-Ḍu‘afā (4974)
[307] Al-Lālākā’ī (1579)
[308] This was narrated by ‘Abdullāh in Al-Sunnah (352), al-Lālākā’ī (1832), and al-Khaṭīb in Tārīkh Baghdad (15/509), and its chain of narration is authentic.
[309]Al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (1342)

Mālik responded: ‘By Allah, īmān increases and decreases. As Allah said: ‘So that they may increase in īmān with their īmān ’ (Al-Fatḥ: 4), and as Ibrāhīm said: ‘My Lord, show me how You give life to the dead.’ He replied: ‘Do you not believe?’ He said: ‘Yes, but to strengthen my heart.’ (Al-Baqarah: 260) Thus, the tranquility of his heart was an increase in his īmān .’”[310]

Abū Bakr ibn Forak al-Ashʿarī (403 AH) in his commentary on the book Al-ʿĀlim wal-Muʿallim attributed to Abū Ḥanīfa stated: The student asked: “Tell me, from where should we say that our īmān is like the īmān of the angels and messengers, knowing that they were more obedient to Allah than us?”

The scholar replied: “We know they were more obedient to Allah than us, but we have been informed that īmān is different from actions. Our īmān is like theirs because we have affirmed the Oneness of the Lord, His Lordship, His Power, and what He revealed, just as the angels acknowledged it and the prophets and messengers believed in it, peace be upon them. From here, we claim that our īmān is like the īmān of the angels because we have believed in everything the angels believed in, including the miracles of Allah which they witnessed, though we did not witness them.”

Ibn Taymīyah stated: “They said: ‘We accept that īmān increases in the sense that whenever Allah reveals a verse, it must be believed, and this belief is added to the belief that was before it. But after the completion of what Allah has revealed, īmān no longer increases, and thus, all people’s īmān is the same. The īmān of the earliest of the believers, like Abū Bakr and ‘Umar, is the same as that of the worst of people, like Ḥajjāj and Abū Muslim al-Khurasānī, and others.’”[311]

Ṣalt ibn Dīnār said: “I heard Ibn Abī Mulaika say: ‘I went through a period in my life where I never heard anyone say ‘I am a believer’ unless he later said: ‘I have īmān like the īmān of Jibrīl and Mīkā’īl.’ Muhammad ﷺ never uttered such a thing. The devil kept playing with them until they said: ‘I am a believer, even if I marry my mother, sister, or daughter.’ By Allah, I witnessed companions of the Prophet ﷺ, and none of them passed away without fearing hypocrisy.’”[312]

Al-Ḥarb al-Kirmānī said: “Whoever claims that his īmān is like the īmān of Jibrīl or the angels is a Murji’ī, and worse than the Murji’ah; he is a liar... Whoever claims that he is a mu’min in the

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[310] Al-Lālākā’ī (1743)
[311] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (195/7)
[312] Tahdhīb al-Āthār by Ibn Abī Mulaika, Musnad Ibn ʿAbbās (1014)

sight of Allāh, completing his īmān, this is one of the most heinous and vile sayings of the Murji'ah."[313]

Ājurrī said: "Whoever says this has committed a great falsehood against Allāh, and brought forth that which contradicts the truth, and which is denied by all scholars. For the one who says this claims that whoever says: 'There is no god but Allāh,' the major sins would not harm him, nor would committing lewd acts be harmful, and he believes that the righteous who does not commit any of this, and the sinner are equal. This is false.

(Allāh says: "Do those who commit evil actions think We will treat them as those who have believed and done righteous actions? Equal are they in their life and death. Evil is that they judge!" [al-Jāthiyah, 45:21])

Say to the one who says this false statement: "O you who are astray and misleading, Allāh has not equated the two groups of believers in righteous actions, even though He has preferred some over others in rank. Allāh said: 'Not equal are those of you who spent before the victory and fought and those who did so after. They are greater in degree than those who spent and fought afterward. And to all, Allāh has promised the best reward, and Allāh is All-Aware of what you do.' [al-Ḥadīd, 57:10] He promised them all goodness after preferring some of them over others. How is it possible for this heretic to equate his īmān with the īmān of Jibrīl and Mīkā'īl and claim that he is truly a mu'min?"[314]

Ibn Baṭṭah said in Al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (23, Chapter on the Sins That Remove a Person from īmān, and If He Repents, īmān Returns to Him): "These reports, and similar ones, and those I have left out because they fall under the same meanings in order to avoid lengthening the book, all point to the deficiency of īmān and the departure of a person from it when committing the sins and transgressions mentioned by the Sunnah. All of this contradicts the views of the Murji'ah who falsely claim that the greatest of people in sin and oppression, once they say: 'There is no god but Allah,' are equal in īmān with Jibrīl , Mīkā'īl, and Ibrāhīm al-Khalīl. Glory be to Allah above what the wrongdoers say."

He also said: "Whoever speaks of īmān, declares belief in Tawḥīd, and affirms that he is a believer in all the obligatory acts but believes that neglecting them does not harm him, and that he does not leave īmān when he neglects them at their prescribed times, such as: prayer, zakāh, fasting the month of Ramadān, performing Ḥajj when able, ghusl from janābah, and believes that if he prays the daytime prayer at night it suffices, or the night prayer during the day suffices,

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[313] Al-Sunnah by Ḥarb al-Kirmānī (11)
[314] Aḥkām al-Sharī'ah" (378)

or fasting in Shawwāl suffices, or Ḥajj in Muḥarram or Ṣafar suffices, and that it does not harm him to delay ghusl from janābah, and he believes that with all this he is a believer, completing his īmān, like the īmān of Jibrīl , Mīkā'īl, and the close angels.

This person denies the Qur'ān, opposes Allāh, His Book, His Messengers, and the Sharī'ah of Islam. There is no difference between him and the Munāfiq described by Allāh in His Book, for Allāh has removed īmān from their hearts, as He said: "The Bedouins say, 'We have believed.' Say, 'You have not believed; but say, 'We have submitted,' for īmān has not yet entered your hearts.'" [Al-Ḥujurāt, 49:14].

He also said (1345): "Beware — may Allāh have mercy on you — of those who say:
a) 'I am a true believer with Allāh.'
b) 'I am a complete believer.'
c) 'My īmān is like the īmān of Jibrīl and Mīkā'īl.'
For these are the Murji'ah, people of misguidance, deviation, and departure from the religion."[315]

[315] Al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (1136)

Murji'ah agreed with Jahmiyyah and Khawārij in saying īmān is a single entity, if part is lost, all is lost, and kufr and Islam cannot co exist within a person.

One of the most foundational errors of Khawārij and Murji'ah regarding īmān where they opposed Ahl As-Sunnah: īmān cannot be divided, if some part goes all of it goes. Obedience and disobedience, minor kufr and īmān, or islam and practical nifaq (hypocrisy) cannot co-exist in a person – if one is found the other is negated.

Khawārij and Muʿtazilah agree with us that īmān is composed in speech and action but they differed by holding: when a part of īmān is lost, all of it is lost, a sinner cannot have any īmān and is destined to be in the fire forever.

The Murji'ah and Jahmiyyah removed action from definition of īmān, arguing: **if we include actions in īmān, then leaving any action would result in kufr, because īmān cannot be fragmented**. They excluded actions from īmān to avoid takfīr of sinful muslim and affirming eternal punishment.

Both sects ended up with the same belief, īmān is a single indivisible thing, it cannot increase, decrease etc. one cannot possess both obedience and sin or īmān and hypocrisy at same time.

Ibn Taymiyyah said: The root dispute of these sects—Khawārij , Murji'ah , Muʿtazilah, Jahmiyyah and others—regarding īmān is that they believed īmān is a single whole. If part of it is lost, the entire īmān is lost. If part of it is present, then all of it is present. They denied the possibility of partial loss or retention, contrary to the Prophet's statement: "A person will exit the Fire who has in his heart the weight of a grain of īmān."

He continued: The Khawārij and Muʿtazilah said: All obedience is part of īmān. If some is lost, īmān is lost, so they declare the major sinner devoid of any īmān. The Murji'ah and Jahmiyyah said: īmān is only one indivisible entity—either just heart conviction (as the Jahmiyyah said), or heart and tongue (as the Murji'ah said). They argued: if we include action in īmān, then abandoning some of it would be kufr—requiring expulsion from īmān, like the Khawārij and Muʿtazilah. So they rejected action from īmān to avoid this."[316]

Ibn Taymiyyah also said: "It is astonishing that the core belief leading them into error was their claim that it is impossible for someone to have both some īmān and some kufr, or both īmān and that which opposes it. They thought this was a consensus, as reported by Abū al-Ḥasan and

[316] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/510)

others. But because of this mistaken assumption, they fell into clear opposition to the true consensus of the Salaf, which many Imāms have transmitted. In fact, some of them (the Salaf)even declared as disbelievers those who held Jahm's view of īmān."[317]

He also said: The reason all these sects fell into error—like the Khawārij and Muʿtazilah—was their belief that īmān cannot be portioned, and if part of it goes, it all goes. The view of Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jamāʿah is that īmān can be divided, it increases and decreases, and some of it can remain even if other parts are lost, as the Prophet said: "A person will come out of the Fire with even a mustard seed's worth of īmān in his heart."[318]

Ibn al-Qayyim said: "There is another core principle: A person can possess both kufr and īmān, shirk and tawḥīd, taqwā and sin, nifāq and īmān. This is one of the great principles of Ahl al-Sunnah, and those who opposed it were the sects of innovation like the Khawārij , Muʿtazilah, and Qadariyyah. The question of whether sinners remain eternally in Hell is based on this principle. The Qur'ān, Sunnah, natural disposition, and consensus of the Companions all affirm this principle."[319]

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[317] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/404)
[318] al-Ṣafadiyyah by Ibn Taymiyyah (p. 197)
[319] al-Ṣalāh by Ibn Qayyim (p. 99)

Murji'ah deny increase or decrease of īmān

We believe īmān increases and decreases and it varies across people. ijmāʿ on this matter has been reported by several scholars.

Ibn Kathīr said: "Al-Bukhārī and others from the Imāms used this verse and similar ones as evidence for the increase of īmān and its varying degrees in the hearts, as held by the majority of the Ummah. Inaction, consensus on this was reported by more than one Imām —like al-Shāfiʿī, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, and Abū ʿUbayd."[320]

The increase and decrease of īmān occurs in the heart's affirmation and awareness of Allah, his statements and external actions. The Murji'ah deny the increase and decrease and deny it in specific aspects like the heart's affirmation etc. Many Salaf explicitly stated: it increases with obedience and decreases with disobedience.

As for knowledge in the heart - does it increase or decrease?

Al-Marwadhī said: 'I asked Aḥmad: "Does the heart's knowledge of Allah vary?" He said: "Yes." I said: "Does it increase?" He said: "Yes."'[321]

Increase in knowledge can be explained as

- Increase in detailed knowledge of Allah's names, attributes, actions, the names of the angels and prophets, revealed books, and the details of the Hereafter.
- Increase in conviction of tawhid by growing in knowledge of its proofs. One who knows more of its signs has greater knowledge then one who doesn't. Same applies to knowledge of prophethood, qadr, hereafter and other matters.

The Murji'ah deny īmān increases and decreases.

Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمه الله) said: "The Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) clearly affirmed that īmān increases and decreases, and this was the view of the Imāms of the Sunnah. Ibn al-Mubārak used to say: 'It increases and varies,' though he would refrain from saying 'it decreases.'"

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[320] Tafsīr Ibn Kathir (12/4)

[321] This was reported from him by al-Khallāl and Abū Bakr ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz in al-Sunnah.

He continued: “The foundation of Ahl al-Sunnah is that īmān varies in two respects:
1.From the side of what Allah commands.
2.From the side of the believer’s own actions.

As for the first: not every believer is commanded with the exact same level of īmān . For example, early Muslims were commanded with a certain level, and then later commanded with more or different obligations, such as the change of qiblah. Likewise, someone upon whom ḥajj, zakāh, or jihād is obligatory must know and believe in these commands in detail, while others may only need general belief. This makes detailed īmān obligatory on some, but not all, and this is where the Murji’ah went wrong. They assumed īmān is one undivided entity that is equal for all, to the point they claimed that the īmān of the Prophets and the worst sinners is the same—as long as they utter the shahādah or recite the Fātiḥah, their expression is the same, so their īmān must be equal.

As for the second type: it refers to how people differ in their fulfillment of what’s required of them. Even if two people share the same obligations, they do not share the same level of fulfillment. So, the īmān of a thief, adulterer, or wine-drinker is not like that of someone who fulfills the obligations. Nor is the īmān of someone who neglects duties equal to someone who performs them.”[322]

Despite the clear textual evidence, the Murji’ah denied the concept of increase and decrease in īmān—contradicting Qur’an, Sunnah, and ijmāʿ. They passionately defended this position in their books, aligned themselves based on it, and even showed loyalty or enmity over it.

The Ḥanafī texts and sectarian writings unanimously affirm that attributing the view “īmān neither increases nor decreases” to Abū Ḥanīfah **is accurate**. The Ḥanafīs themselves accept this attribution; none of them disowned it.

Ibn al-Humām said in al-Musāyarah: “Abū Ḥanīfah and his companions said: īmān neither increases nor decreases.”[323]

Shurayk al-Qāḍī (رحمه الله) said: “Abū Ḥanīfah claimed that īmān does not increase or decrease and claimed that ṣalāh is not from the dīn of Allah.”[324]

Khuwayl said: “I said to ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Abī Rawwād: ‘īmān is statement and action; it increases and decreases.’ He said: ‘īmān is one, but people differ in their ranks in Paradise.’

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[322] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (13/50)
[323] al-Musāmarah, commentary on al-Musāyarah (p. 367)
[324] Tārīkh Baghdād (15/502)

I said: ‘Our companions say: īmān increases and decreases.’ He asked: ‘Who are your companions?’ I replied: ʿAyyūb, Yūnus, Ibn ʿAwn.’ He said: ‘May Allah not increase their kind among the Muslims.’”[325]

Ibn al-Humām (Ḥanafī) also wrote, under the chapter on apostasy: “Among the statements that expel a person from Islam is the claim that īmān increases and decreases!”[326]

Ibn al-Ḥakīm al-Samarqandī said: “One must know that īmān does not increase or decrease. Whoever believes in increase and decrease in īmān is an innovator… None of the scholars or righteous predecessors ever said that īmān increases or decreases.”[327]

The Murji’ah even fabricated hadiths to support their position.

Abū Muṭīʿ al-Ḥakam ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Balkhī was one of the leaders of the Murji’ah . Al-Jawzajānī said: “Abū Muṭīʿ was among the leaders of the Murji’ah who used to fabricate ḥadīths.”

Ibn Ḥibbān said: “Al-Ḥakam ibn ʿAbd Allāh Abū Muṭīʿ al-Balkhī… was among the leaders of the Murji’ah , and he detested the Sunnah and its followers. He is the one who narrated from Ḥammād ibn Salamah, from Abū al-Muhazzim, from Abū Hurayrah, the following ḥadīth: ‘The delegation of Thaqīf came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked him whether īmān increases or decreases. He replied: No, its increase is disbelief, and its decrease is shirk.’”[328]

They fabricated other ḥadīths as well, none of which are authentic, as Ibn al-Qayyim said in al-Manār al-Munīf (p. 266): “Every ḥadīth which says that īmān does not increase or decrease is a lie.”

What is strange is that Mullā ʿAlī al-Qārī al-Ḥanafī, followed up on this and said: “The meaning of the first wording — that is, ‘īmān does not increase or decrease’ — is sound according to the later verifying scholars; the only issue is the authenticity of its chain.”[329]

Many groups such as the Ashʿarīs, Khawārij , Muta’azila, Jahmiyyah agree with the Murji’ah in denying īmān increases and decreases, because to them if a part of īmān is lost all is lost. It is a single indivisible entity.

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[325] al-Majrūḥīn by Ibn Ḥibbān (no. 1372)
[326] al-Baḥr al-Rā’iq (5/131)
[327] al-Sawād al-Aʿẓam, p. 33)
[328] al-Majrūḥīn (2/236)
[329] al-Asrār al-Marfuʿah (p. 479)

Sufyān al-Ṯhawrī said: “The difference between us and the Murji’ah is in three things,” and among what he mentioned: “We say: īmān increases and decreases, and they say: It does not increase or decrease.”[330]

Al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ said: “The people of innovation say: īmān is affirmation without actions, and īmān is one. People only differ in actions, not in īmān .”[331]

[330] Ṣifat al-Nifāq by al-Firyābī (p. 87)
[331] al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh ibn Aḥmad (793)

Some of the Murji'ah said - īmān increases and doesn't decrease

A group from among them appeared to agree with Ahl As-Sunnah saying īmān increases but deny its decrease.

Ibn Taymiyyah said: "'This is why the Murji'ah were more averse to the term 'decrease' than they were to the term 'increase.'"[332]

Because of this, they would label Ahl al-Sunnah as "Naqṣāniyyah" (those who affirm deficiency/decrease).

As Abū Ḥātim and Abū Zurʿah said in their ʿAqīdah (43): "The sign of the Murji'ah is that they call Ahl al-Sunnah 'opposers' and 'naqṣāniyyah.'"

Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Wāṣil al-Muqri' said: Abū ʿAbd Allāh was asked about someone who said: "īmān is only speech without action, and it increases but does not decrease." He said: "This is the saying of the Murji'ah ."[333]

Sufyān ibn ʿUyaynah said: "īmān is speech and action, it increases and decreases." His brother Ibrāhīm said to him: "O Abū Muḥammad, don't say: it decreases." Sufyān became angry and replied: "Be quiet, boy! It does decrease until nothing remains of it."[334]

Ḥarb al-Kirmānī said: "Whoever claims that īmān neither increases nor decreases is a Murji'ī. And whoever says that īmān increases but does not decrease has stated a saying of the Murji'ah ."[335]

Some scholars from Ahl As-Sunnah refrained from using decrease with respect to īmān not as a denial of īmān decreasing, as īmān increasing necessitates decrease.

Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Wāṣil al-Muqri' said: Abū ʿAbd Allāh was asked about someone who said: "īmān is only speech without action, and it increases but does not decrease."
He said: "This is the saying of the Murji'ah ."[336]

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[332] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/404)
[333] al-Sunnah by al-Khallāl (962)
[334] al-īmān by al-ʿAdanī (28)
[335] As-Sunnah by Ḥarb al-Kirmānī (8)
[336] al-Sunnah by al-Khallāl (962)

Al-Khallāl narrated from Aḥmad ibn al-Qāsim: I said: “O Abā ʿAbd Allāh, do you say that īmān increases and decreases?” We then discussed those who held this view and listed many, and he said: “And Mālik ibn Anas also says: It increases and decreases.” I said to him: “But it is reported that Mālik said: It increases but does not decrease.” He replied: “No, it has been narrated from him that it increases and decreases. Ibn Nāfiʿ narrated that from Mālik.” I asked: “Ibn Nāfiʿ narrated that from Mālik?” He replied: “Yes.”[337]

It has been reported by some of the Salaf that īmān varies in degrees.

ʿAbd Allāh narrated: Ibn al-Mubārak — may Allah have mercy on him — said: “īmān is speech and action, and īmān varies in degree (yatafāḍal).”[338]

Al-Khallāl narrated from al-Marwadhī: Abū ʿAbd Allāh — meaning Imām Aḥmad — was told: “Ibn al-Mubārak used to say: ‘It increases but does not decrease.’” He replied: “He used to say: ‘īmān varies in degree.’”[339]

Al-Khallāl narrated that Muḥammad ibn Abān said: I asked ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Mahdī: “Is īmān speech and action?” He said: “Yes.” I said: “Does it increase and decrease?” He said: “It varies in degree — one statement is better than another.”[340]

This expression does not contradict the consensus of Ahl al-Sunnah on the belief that īmān increases and decreases.

Ibn Hāni’ said in Masā’il (no. 1722): I heard Abū ʿAbd Allāh (Imām Aḥmad) ask Ibn Abī Razmah: “What did your father say regarding Ibn al-Mubārak’s view on īmān ?” He said: “He used to say: ‘īmān varies in degree.’” Abū ʿAbd Allāh replied: “How strange! If he had said to you: ‘It increases and decreases,’ you would have stoned him. But if he says: ‘It varies,’ you leave him alone. Is there anything that varies in degree except that it increases and decreases?”

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[337] as-Sunnah by al-Khallāl (1028)
[338] as-Sunnah by Abd Allāh (613)
[339] as-Sunnah by al-Khallāl (1018)
[340] as-Sunnah by al-Khallāl (989)

Increase and decrease of īmān according to Ashāʿirah

The Position of majority of the Ashāʿirah is īmān doesn't increase or decrease, īmān is tasdiq and tasdiq is a singular, indivisible entity. **If it were to decrease then it would imply doubt and doubt is disbelief.**

Ashāʿirah use ambiguous and misleading language to appeal to the general public, outwardly they are Ahl As-Sunnah using statements as "īmān increases and decreases" however in reality this is a lie. They do ta'wil on this as they do ta'wil on sifāt of Allah

Some claim that the increase and decrease pertains to action, according to them, isn't to do with īmān, others say it refers to rewards of actions.

Al-Bāqillānī, the Ashʿarī, said: "We do not deny the usage of the phrase 'īmān increases and decreases' as found in the Qur'ān and Sunnah. But the increase and decrease in īmān refer to one of two things: either it refers to statements and actions — apart from affirmation — since this can be conceived of while maintaining īmān . As for affirmation, if even the slightest deficiency occurs in it, īmān becomes void."[341]

Al-Sijzī said in his Risālah ilā Ahl Zubayd (p. 274) in the seventh chapter — clarifying their behavior of affirming the attributes outwardly but resorting to interpretation inwardly: "The people of ḥadīth are upon the belief that īmān is speech and action, and that it increases and decreases. All the scholars of the lands who follow the Sunnah are upon this view. But our opponents [i.e., the Ashʿarīs] outwardly say the same, yet they hold that affirmation (taṣdīq) does not admit increase or decrease — and that is what they consider to be īmān."

Ibn al-Bannā' said: "īmān itself and its reward increase with obedience and decrease with sin — in opposition to the Muʿtazilah, who say it neither increases nor decreases, and in opposition to the Ashʿarīs, who say only its reward increases and decreases, not īmān itself."[342]

al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ [343]said: "The people of innovation say: īmān is affirmation without action, and īmān is one single entity. People only differ in their actions, not in their īmān ."

So he considered it among the sayings of innovators that increase and decrease only occur in actions, with no effect on the heart or on affirmation.

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[341] al-Inṣāf by Al-Bāqillānī (p. 57)
[342] al-Radd ʿalā al-Mubtadiʿah (p. 244)
[343] al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh ibn Aḥmad (793)

Al-Laqqānī said in Jawharat al-Tawḥīd: “And the view that īmān increases with an increase in a person’s obedience and decreases with its decrease has been given preference. And it was said: no. And it was said: there is no real disagreement — thus it has been transmitted.”

So he mentioned three positions:
1.That īmān increases with increased obedience, and decreases with decreased obedience.
2.That īmān does not increase nor decrease.
3.That the **disagreement between the two parties is not real but merely verbal — and its interpretation is that the statement “īmān increases and decreases” refers to that which perfects it, namely actions;** whereas the statement “īmān does not increase or decrease” refers to the inner affirmation (taṣdīq), which is the essence of īmān — so the difference returns to wording, not substance.

This last view – was held by some of the Murji’ah such as Ar-Rāzī and Juwaynī is also held by some of the Murji’s of our time. They innovated “minimum threshold of īmān” and claimed it is not subject to decrease, and what is above it can increase or decrease.

This minimum threshold corresponds to “essence of īmān” according to early Murji’ah, and **what is above it corresponds to actions.** These modern offshoots agreed to include actions in the definition and affirmed connection between inward and outward.

Consequence of this affirmation is inner vanishes with the vanishing of outwards otherwise they are forced into two unacceptable outcomes: Must accept that a bounded thing can decrease and then decrease again, without ever ceasing to exist. Must also outright state, īmān remains without any action.

To avoid this they innovated the idea - minimum threshold of īmān.
They said: this minimum is not subject to decrease, but what is beyond it can increase or decrease. This resembles the early view of the Murji’ah while opposing the Salaf.

This Resemblance of Murji’ah is due to the fact, **the Murji’ah are more averse to the term decrease then increase.** These people restricted decrease to a certain limit, but left increase unrestricted i.e increase and decrease are not on equal footing.

Whereas the Salaf stated īmān can decrease until nothing remains.

Invalidity of murji'ah denial that īmān can decrease until nothing remains

Some affirmed what the Salaf affirmed that īmān can increase and decrease **yet denied it can decrease completely until nothing remains.**

The Salaf held that actions are part and pillar of īmān. **When action disappears, so does īmān until nothing remains.**

Thee Murji'ah say: Actions is merely a perfection of īmān , a branch from its branches. If action disappears the root of īmān - namely affirmation and acknowledgement – remains. īmān does not completely vanish but a "minimal threshold" remains, such as a mustard seed or atoms weight – which in their view is enough to save one from the fire.

Among the reports from the Imāms of Ahl al-Sunnah confirming that īmān can decrease until nothing remains — contrary to the Murji'ah :

Imām al-Awzāʿī (d. 157 AH) was asked about īmān : "Does it increase?" He said: "Yes, until it becomes like mountains." He was asked: "Does it decrease?" He said: "Yes, until nothing remains of it."[344]

Sufyān ibn ʿUyaynah (d. 198 AH) said: "īmān is statement and action. It increases and decreases." His brother Ibrāhīm ibn ʿUyaynah said to him: "O Abā Muḥammad, do not say: 'it decreases.'" He became angry and said: "Be quiet, boy! Rather, it decreases until nothing remains of it."[345]

Some of the Murji'ah of our time oppose Sufyan's statement claiming it was a statement of anger and a slip of tongue. We will refute this lie in'sha'allah.

Abū ʿUthmān Bashshār ibn Mūsā al-Khaffāf (d. 228 AH) said: "īmān is statement, action, and intention. It increases and decreases until it becomes greater than a mountain and decreases until nothing remains of it."[346]

ʿAlī ibn ʿAbdillāh al-Madīnī (d. 234 AH) was asked about īmān . He said: "Statement, action, and intention." I asked: "Does it increase and decrease?" He said: "Yes, it increases and decreases until nothing remains of it."[347]

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[344] al-Lālakāʾī (1576)
[345] al-īmān by al-ʿAdanī (28)
[346] al-Sunnah by Ḥarb (144)
[347] Tafsīr al-Thaʿlabī (3/213)

Isḥāq ibn Rāhwayh (d. 238 AH) said: “īmān is statement and action. It increases and decreases — it decreases until nothing remains of it.” al-Kawsaj (d. 251 AH) said: “And I say the same.”[348]

It was said to Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (d. 241 AH): “Ibn al-Mubārak used to say: ‘It increases but does not decrease?’” He said: “He used to say: ‘īmān varies in degree.’ And Sufyān used to say: ‘It decreases until nothing remains of it.’”[349]

al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī al-Barbahārī (d. 329 AH) said: “And īmān is that īmān is statement and action, and action and statement, and intention and correctness. It increases and decreases — it increases as Allāh wills, and it decreases until nothing remains of it.”[350]

Muḥammad ibn Isḥāq ibn Mandah (d. 395 AH) said in al-īmān (1/345): “He mentioned a report indicating that īmān can decrease until not even a mustard seed remains in the heart of the servant — and that striving with the heart, tongue, and hand is part of īmān .”

These are some of the sayings of Ahl al-Sunnah. No one opposes them except a Murji’ driven by his desires.

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[348] Masā’il al-Kawsaj (3538); al-Sunnah by al-Khallāl (1011)
[349] al-Sunnah by al-Khallāl (1018)
[350] Sharḥ al-Sunnah by al-Barbahārī (27)

Murji'ah forbid istithnā' in īmān and accuse us of doubt

Since īmān is speech, action and belief, it increases and decreases, this leads to the issue of istithnā'. This is not out of doubt.

Ḥarb al-Kirmānī said in his As-Sunnah transmitting scholarly consensus (pp. 4–5), said:

"istithnā' is allowed in īmān, as long as it is not out of shakk (Doubt). Rather, it is a practice handed down from the scholars."

So if a man is asked, "Are you a believer?" he may answer in one of the following ways:
1."I am a believer, in shā' Allāh."
2."A believer, I hope."
3."I believe in Allāh, His angels, His books, and His messengers."

Ājurrī (d. 360 AH) said: "From the traits of Ahl al-Ḥaqq among the scholars we have mentioned is making istithnā' in īmān — not out of shakk (we seek refuge with Allāh from doubting īmān) — but out of fear of self-praise (tazkiyat al-nafs), for one does not know whether he truly fulfills complete īmān. This was the way of the Companions and those who followed them in goodness. They held that istithnā' applies to actions, not to verbal confession or inner belief. Outwardly, people are judged believers — they inherit, marry, and all rulings of Islam apply to them — but the inner exception remains, as clarified by the scholars."[351]

Ibn Baṭṭah (d. 387 AH) said: "Among the traits of people of intellect and knowledge is that a man says: 'I am a believer, in shā' Allāh', not out of doubt. We seek refuge with Allāh from doubting īmān — for īmān is affirmation of Allāh's lordship, submission to His worship, and belief in everything He says, commands, and prohibits. Whoever doubts any of this is a disbeliever without a doubt."[352]

The most accurate and balanced position is that both using and omitting istithnā' are valid — depending on intention.

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[351] al-Sharīʿah by Ājurrī (343)
[352] al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (no. 1260)

Ibn taymiyyah clarifies The valid reasons for making istithnā' include:

> 1.Avoiding self-praise — affirming for oneself a level of complete īmān that one cannot be sure of, as it includes fulfilling every command and avoiding every prohibition.
>
> 2.Uncertainty over whether Allāh has accepted one's actions — the doubt is in acceptance, not in īmān itself.
>
> 3.Fear of a bad ending (sū' al-khātimah) and not knowing one's final state.
>
> 4.Even when certain, one may say "in shā' Allāh" as a way of submitting all matters to the will of Allāh.[353]

The Murji'ah opposed Ahl As-Sunnah in this. They disallowed it and treated it as doubt. Some of them accused the Salaf as doubters. The Extreme of them considered the statement as kufr and apostasy.

It is based on their fundamental disagreement: Does īmān increase and decrease, is it composed of parts or a singular entity, if a part is lost does it mean all of it is lost.

Among the many statements of the Murji'ah on this issue is what appears in al-Fiqh al-Absat, where Abū Muṭīʿ said: Abū Ḥanīfah said: "One should say: I am truly a believer, for he should not doubt his īmān." I said: "Is his īmān like the īmān of the angels?" He said: "Yes." (although this book –the narrator is weak, it is evidence since the narrator himself was a Jahmite Murji).[354]

Ibn Taymiyyah said: "Abū Ḥanīfah and his companions do not permit istithnā' in īmān."[355]

He also said: "The Murji'ah and the Muʿtazilah say that istithnā' is not permissible, considering it to be doubt."[356]

Al-Khwālī said: "I said to ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Abī Rawwād: 'What do you say about īmān?' He said: 'It is a statement without action.' I said: 'Our companions do not say this.' He said: 'Who are your companions?' I replied: 'Ayyūb, Ibn ʿAwn, and Yūnus.' He said: 'Doubters! May Allāh not increase the likes of them in the Muslims.'"[357]

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[353] See: Ārā' al-Murji'ah fī Muṣannafāt Shaykh al-Islām: ʿArḍ wa-Naqd, p. 454
[354] al-Fiqh al-Absat (p. 46)
[355] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (13/41)
[356] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/666)
[357] Al-Ḍuʿafā' by al-ʿAqīlī (3384), and Al-Thiqāt by Ibn Ḥibbān (2/136)

Some of the Murji'ah have gone to extremes in this issue, mentioning the istithnā'in the context of apostasy and leaving the religion, and they built upon it many rulings.

Badr al-Rashīd al-Ḥanafī (768 AH) said: "A man says: 'I am a believer, if Allāh wills,' without any interpretation – he has disbelieved."[358]

Al-Faḍlī said: "A man should not make an istithnā' in his īmān, nor say: 'I am a believer, if Allāh wills,' because he is commanded to believe, and making an istithnā' contradicts that."

Ahl As-Sunnah have opposed the Murji'ah in this matter.

Harb ibn Ismāʿīl al-Karmānī said in his As-Sunnah, in which he narrated the consensus of those he encountered from the scholars (113): "As for the Murji'ah , they call the people of the Sunnah 'doubters.' The Murji'ah are the ones who are truly doubtful and who reject the truth."

ʿAbd Allāh ibn Aḥmad said: "My father narrated to me, and ʿAlī ibn Baḥr narrated to us, I heard Jarīr ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd say: 'īmān is statement and action, and al-Aʿmash, and Mansūr, and Mughīrah, and Layth, and ʿAṭā' ibn al-Sā'ib, and Ismāʿīl ibn Abī Ḥālid, and ʿUmārah ibn al-Qaʿqāʿ, and al-ʿAlā' ibn al-Musayyib, and Ibn Shibramah, and Sufyān al-Thawrī, and Abū Yaḥyā the companion of al-Ḥasan, and Ḥamzah al-Zayyāt, all used to say: 'We are believers, if Allāh wills,' and they used to criticize those who did not make an istithnā'.'"[359]

Ājurrī said: "Beware, may Allāh have mercy on you, of the saying of those who claim that their īmān is like the īmān of Jibrīl and Mīkā'īl, or those who say: 'I am a believer with Allāh,' or 'I am a believer who has completed īmān.' This is the view of the Murji'ah."[360]

Ibn Baṭṭāh said: "None except a wicked Murji'ī, misguided, whose heart has been seized by Shayṭān, would reject the acceptance of istithnā' in īmān. We seek refuge in Allāh from him."[361]

Shurayk al-Qāḍī and Sufyān al-Thawrī refused to pray over the funeral of Masʿar ibn Kādām because he did not make an istithnā' in his īmān.

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[358] Al-Ẓawāhir al-Kufr (51)
[359] Al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh ibn Aḥmad (675)
[360] al-Sharīʿah by Ājurrī (375)
[361] Al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (1277)

SOME IMPORTANT POINTS

FIRST ISSUE

The Murji'ah introduced the question "are you a believer?". The Salaf considered this an innovation. Some warnings against this include:

Al-Ājurrī in Al-Sharīʿah (28) has a chapter titled: "Whoever dislikes from the scholars asking another: 'Are you a believer?' This is considered an innovation by them, and such a person is an evil man."

Ibn Baṭṭā in Al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (30) has a chapter titled: "Asking someone: 'Are you a believer?' and how the scholars disliked this question, considering the one asking it as an innovator."

Ibn Taymiyyah said: "Aḥmad and others from the Salaf used to dislike asking someone: 'Are you a believer?' and they disliked the answer because this is an innovation introduced by the Murji'ah to support their argument. A person knows himself to not be a disbeliever, and his heart affirms what the Prophet brought, so when he says, 'I am a believer,' it affirms that īmān is just belief. But you cannot be sure that you've done all that was commanded, so the Salaf, knowing their purpose, disliked the answer or would give a qualified response."[362]

SECOND ISSUE

If a person agrees īmān is both action and speech, it increases and decreases, and hesitates doing istithnā', Imām Aḥmad would make allowance and not treat him as a murji who excludes action from definition of īmān.

Abd Allāh ibn Aḥmad said: "I asked my father about a man who says: 'īmān is statement and action, and it increases and decreases,' but does not make an istithnā'. Is he a Murji'ī?" He replied: "I hope he is not a Murji'ī."[363]

Abū Bakr al-Athram said: "I said to Abū ʿAbd Allāh (Imām Aḥmad), when he mentioned istithnā' out of caution and precaution, 'So it seems you do not see it as a problem if someone does not make an istithnā'?' He said: 'If he says: 'īmān is speech and action, and it increases and decreases,' then I consider it easier for him.' He continued: 'There are people whose hearts become weak regarding istithnā', as if they are amazed by it!'"[364]

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[362] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/448)
[363] Al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh ibn Aḥmad (586)
[364] Al-Sunnah by al-Khallāl (1042)

Perhaps Imām Aḥmad made allowances for this issue because he believed that anyone who acknowledges that īmān is both statement and action, and that it increases and decreases, should logically make an istithnā'.

Al-Khallāl narrated from Ḥabīsh ibn Sandī who said: "A man came to him and asked him about īmān. He replied: 'It is a statement and action.' He asked: 'Does it increase?' He said: 'It increases and decreases.' He asked: 'Should I say: I am a believer if Allāh wills?' He replied: 'Yes.' He said: 'They are calling me a shāl.' The man said: 'What an evil thing they are saying.' The man left, but then Imām Aḥmad called him back, saying: 'Did they not say: īmān is statement and action, and it increases and decreases?' He replied: 'Yes.' He said: 'These are those who make an istithnā'.'"[365]

THIRD ISSUE - Should one make istithnā' regarding islam

Common view is to leave it out for Islam - indicated by verse Surah Hujurat: 14.

Ibn Taymiyyah mentions in Majmū' al-Fatāwā (7/253) while discussing the above-mentioned verses of Al-Ḥujurāt, that this verse was used by Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal and others to argue that one should make an istithnā' in īmān (īmān), but not in Islam, and that those committing major sins move from īmān to Islam.

Al-Maimūnī said: I asked Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal about his opinion on: "I am a Mu'min (believer), Inshā'Allāh?" He replied: "I say: Mu'min (believer), Inshā'Allāh, and I say: Muslim (one who submits) without making an istithnā'." I asked him: "Do you differentiate between Islam and īmān?" He replied: "Yes." I asked: "What do you use as evidence?" He said: 'The Bedouins say, 'We have believed.' Say, 'You have not believed; rather, say, 'We have submitted.' and he mentioned other things.

Ibn Taymiyyah says in Majmū' al-Fatāwā (7/414) while discussing the issue of the difference between Islam and īmān: "the third opinion is that īmān is more complete and better, and this is what is indicated by the Qur'an and Sunnah in many places, and it is also what was transmitted from the companions and the followers (tabi'īn) who did well.

Then, some people say: Islam is merely the statement, and actions are not part of Islam, while the correct view is that Islam encompasses all the outward actions. Aḥmad only refrained from

[365] Al-Sunnah by al-Khallāl (1038)

making an istithnāʾ based on the statement of Al-Zuhrī that Islam is the word. This was transmitted by Al-Athrām, Al-Maimūnī, and others from him.

As for his other response, where he did not choose the statement that Islam is just the word, he would make an istithnāʾ in Islam just as he would in īmān, because one cannot be certain that they have done all that is required of them in Islam. If the Prophet ﷺ said, "A Muslim is the one from whom the Muslims are safe from his tongue and hand," and Islam is based on five pillars, one must be certain they have fulfilled all five pillars without deficiency, just as one is certain of their īmān . Allah said: "Enter into Islam completely" [Al-Baqarah: 208], meaning Islam in its entirety, which encompasses all the laws of Islam. The reasoning from Aḥmad and others is that what applies to īmān also applies to Islam. If Islam is understood as just the word, then no istithnāʾ would be made in it, as stated by Aḥmad and others. If it refers to performing all the outward obligations, then an istithnāʾ in Islam would be like the istithnāʾ in īmān.

Since everyone who says the two testimonies becomes a Muslim, distinct from the Jews and Christians, and the rulings of Islam apply to them just as they apply to Muslims, this is something that can be asserted without making an istithnāʾ. That is why Al-Zuhrī said: "Islam is the word." Aḥmad and others agreed with this, but when they agreed, they did not intend that the required Islam is just the word, because Al-Zuhrī was too esteemed for that misunderstanding. This is why Aḥmad did not give this response in his second answer, fearing it would be understood that Islam is only the word."

The Fourth Issue: Is an istithnāʾ Made for Kufr (Disbelief)?

Ibn Taymiyyah mentions in Majmūʾ al-Fatāwā (7/431): "The majority of the scholars hold that no istithnāʾ is made in the case of Kufr, and making an istithnāʾ in Kufr is an innovation (bidʿah) that has not been known from any of the predecessors."

Some of them outwardly agree with the concept but they differ in detail and explanation in other aspects of aqeedah.

īmān to them is that which the servant fulfils with his lord, meaning the servant remains with it until the end of his life and Allah takes them in this state. This īmān is the one they consider valid and based on that they apply istithnā’.

They do not make istithnā’ regarding actions, because to them īmān is tasdiq, and **actions are not part of īmān that could result in disbelief if abandoned.**

Ibn Taymiyyah mentions: “Those who require making al-istithnā” have two main reasons: One is that īmān is what one dies upon, and a person is considered a believer (mu’min) or a disbeliever (kāfir) in relation to what they die upon, not what preceded it. What has been decreed by Allah regarding their end state is what matters, and anything prior to that is irrelevant. They argued that īmān which is followed by kufr (disbelief) is not considered īmān, similar to ṣalāh (prayer) which is invalidated before completion or ṣawm (fasting) which is broken before sunset. The person who dies in a state of kufr is considered to have never had true īmān. This is the reasoning of many later scholars such as the followers of the Kalām school, and others who attempt to reconcile their views with what is commonly attributed to Ahl al-Sunnah, namely the phrase “I am a believer, Inshā’Allāh” while believing that īmān does not differ in its degree nor do people doubt its existing state, but only in the future.”[366]

They further stated: Allah loved those who were disbelievers in their earlier stages but he knew they would die a believer. Arguing the ṣaḥābah who worshiped idols was beloved to allah for a period and iblis remained hated by allah even he did not disbelieve. (due to their end state).

Al-Juwaynī said: “If it is said that it was narrated from your predecessors that they linked īmān with Allah’s will, and whenever one of them was asked about their īmān, they would say ‘I am a mu’min (believer), Inshā’Allāh,’ then what is the implication of that? We say: īmān is confirmed in the present moment, without any doubt. However, the īmān that is the sign of success and the evidence of salvation is īmān upon death. This is the īmān of al-muwāfāt (the final state), which is why the predecessors cared for it and coupled it with al-mashī’ah (Allah’s will). They did not intend to cast doubt on the completed īmān.”[367]

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[366] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/429)
[367] Al-Irshād (p. 336)

Al-Baghhdādī states: “Anyone who meets their Lord with īmān is a mu’min (believer), and anyone who meets Him without the īmān they showed in this world, it is known that they were never truly a mu’min.” One of these individuals may say: “I know that my īmān is true, and its opposite is false. If I meet my Lord with it, I am truly a mu’min,” and so they make an istithnā” about their state of being a mu’min, but they do not make an istithnā’ regarding the correctness of their īmān.”[368]

This is False belief not stated by any of the Salaf!

Ibn Taymiyyah mentions: “As for the methodology of the Salaf of the Ahl al-Ḥadīth, like Ibn Masʿūd, Al-Thawrī, Ibn ʿUyaynah, most of the scholars of Kūfah, Yaḥyā ibn Saʿīd al-Qaṭṭān in what he transmitted from the scholars of Basrah, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, and others from the Imāms of Ahl al-Sunnah, they used to make al-istithnā” in īmān, and this is widely reported from them. However, none of them said: ‘I make an exception because of al-muwāfāt (the final state), and that īmān is only valid based on what one dies upon.’

Rather, the Imāms of the Salaf clearly stated that the istithnā” was made because īmān includes the performance of obligatory actions (fara’id), and they would not bear witness for themselves regarding these actions as they would not bear witness to their own piety and taqwa, as this would be a form of self-praise without knowledge, as we will mention in their statements, Inshā’Allāh. As for al-muwāfāt (the final state), I have not encountered anyone from the Salaf who justified the istithnā” with it; however, many later scholars of Ahl al-Ḥadīth, such as those from the school of Aḥmad, Mālik, al-Shāfiʿī, and others, as well as their counterparts like Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ashʿarī and most of his followers, began justifying it with this reasoning. But this was not the view of the Salaf of Ahl al-Ḥadīth.”[369]

This statement by Ibn Taymiyyah clarifies the difference between the understanding of the Ashʿarī school and the actual stance of the Salaf on al-istithnā” regarding īmān.

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[368] Uṣūl al-Dīn (p. 253)
[369] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/439)

Statement of Murji'ah – "people are either believers or disbelievers" and the statement of Ahl As-Sunnah – "muslims, believers and disbelievers"

Since īmān to the Khawārij and Murji'ah is not divisible or fragmented, people are either believers or disbelievers, with no third category.

For the Khawārij , the believer is one who fulfils all obligation and refrains from all prohibition, anyone who does not meet this standard is a disbeliever with eternal punishment in hell.

For the Murji;ah, a believer is someone who speaks with tongue and believes in heart, even if he neglects everything and commits all sins, such a person is a complete believer.

There is No category for the sinner in their view, Khawārij categorize him with disbelief and Murji'ah categorize them with belief.

Ahl As-Sunnah are guided by Allah regarding the truth in the matter of differing opinion and thus divided people into three, based on the Qur'ān and sunnah.

Believer (Mu'min) is one who fulfils obligation, performs recommended acts, refrains from prohibition and avoids disliked action. Muslim is one who neglects some obligatory actions (excluding prayer) or commits some sin (excluding shirk). Such a person is removed from full belief to the realm of islam and is under Allah's will. If he wills, he will be punished and if he wills, he may punish him.

For Ahl As-Sunnah, Islam is the lower degree of īmān , it is this category that the sinful believer falls into, while there is no category above islam except disbelief. Other sects only recognise belief and disbelief with no distinction into who falls into the category of islam. A disbeliever in Allah is someone who does not believe in him at all or does something that takes him out of islam.

Ahl As-Sunnah refutation of the Murji;ah on the denial of the status of fusuq (corruption) while retaining islam are numerous:

Salam ibn Abī Muṭīʿ said: "I heard Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī and a man from the Murji'ah was present, and the man kept saying, 'It is only either disbelief or belief.'" Ayyūb remained silent, then turned to him and said: "What do you say about the verse: 'And others are deferred to the

will of Allah, either to punish them or forgive them'? [At-Tawbah: 106] Are they believers or disbelievers?" The man remained silent. Ayyūb then said: "Go and read the Qur'an. Every verse about hypocrisy, I fear it for myself."[370]

Abū Dāwūd narrated: "I heard Aḥmad ibn Hanbal say: A man asked him, 'Am I a believer?' He replied: 'Yes. Is there anything wrong with that? Are people only believers or disbelievers?'" Aḥmad became angry and said: "This is the language of the Murji'ah! Allah says: 'And others are deferred to the will of Allah...' [At-Tawbah: 106]. Who are these?"[371]

Ājurrī said:: "How excellent is the statement of Muḥammad ibn 'Alī—inaction, īmān increases and decreases; it increases with obedience and decreases with disobedience."[372]

Ibn Baṭṭah said: "This statement from Abū Ja'far is among the clearest and most eloquent proofs for the increase and decrease of īmān. īmān Increases with acts of obedience, which strengthen it, and it decreases with acts of disobedience, which weaken it—yet this does not take a person out of Islam, because Islam is not described as increasing or decreasing."[373]

Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī said: "The correct view in our opinion concerning the Prophet's statement, "The adulterer does not commit adultery while he is a believer..." is that he loses the title associated with praise and is instead called with titles of blame, such as disobedient, wicked, adulterer, thief. There is no disagreement among the scholars that these are his names unless he shows signs of sincere repentance. These remain his titles until such repentance appears.

If someone says: "Does he lose the title of īmān by committing that sin?" We reply: We remove the title in an unqualified sense but affirm it with restriction and connection. If he says: "How do you remove it unqualified yet affirm it conditionally?" We say: We refer to him as a believer in Allah and His Messenger, affirming with his speech what Muḥammad came with—but we do not call him unconditionally a believer, since īmān in our view includes knowledge, speech, and action.

The one who knows, affirms, but contradicts in action what he affirms by word is not entitled to the unqualified name of īmān. He has not fulfilled the full meanings required to be called a believer without condition. But he possesses meanings that entitle him to be called so in a

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[370] Al-Firyābī narrated in Ṣifat an-Nifāq (86)
[371] As-Sunnah by Al-Khallāl (951)
[372] al-Sharī'ah by Ājurrī (278)
[373] al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (1236)

connected manner in Arabic usage—while we prevent the other usage based on the guidance of the Book of Allah, the Sunnah of His Messenger, and sound reasoning."[374]

Ibn Taymiyyah said: "Those among the Salaf who said that sinners exit from īmān to Islām did not mean that nothing of īmān remained with them. That is the view of the Khārijites and the Muʿtazilites. The Ahl al-Sunnah who said this, believe that the sinners will exit from the fire through intercession, and that they possess īmān that prevents them from remaining in Hell forever; however, they are not described with the title of īmān because the absolute īmān is what entitles its possessor to reward and entry into Paradise, and these individuals do not have this entitlement. They are still addressed by the term īmān. In truth, those who are not true believers are referred to as "Muslims," and they possess īmān that prevents them from remaining forever in Hell, and this is agreed upon by the Ahl al-Sunnah. But whether we call them "believers" is a matter of dispute.

As for the Khārijites and the Muʿtazilites, they exclude them from the name of īmān and Islām because for them, īmān and Islām are the same; if someone leaves īmān, they leave Islām. The Khārijites say: they are disbelievers, while the Muʿtazilites say: they are neither disbelievers nor believers, placing them in an intermediate position."[375]

[374] Tahdhīb al-Āthār (Musnad Ibn ʿAbbās 2/650)
[375] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/240)

Murji'ah do not distinguish between abandoning obligatory actions or committing forbidden acts

The Salaf and those of their methodology clearly differentiated between obligatory acts and committing forbidden acts. **Abandoning obligatory acts without any excuse is considered disbelief that takes one out of the fold of islam**, however committing forbidden acts without deeming them permissible (istihlal) is considered a major sin.

For the Murji'ah, they do not see any difference between abandoning obligatory acts and committing forbidden acts.

Some Salafis claimed that "a muslim does not become a disbeliever no matter how many sins he commits including abandoning prayer, zakat, fasting and so on or committing forbidden acts like adultery and drinking alcohol. Such a person doesn't become a disbeliever and all of these are merely sins."[376]

Some say "there is no difference between one who abandons prayer, zakat, fasting etc or any practicals acts of worship – **he becomes a disbeliever when he denies it and he remains a believer when he does not deny it"**.

They use as evidence hadiths such: "Enter Paradise the one who says 'Lā ilāha illā Allāh' even though he has not performed any good actions except for that. He will enter Paradise, even if after becoming black coal." – **to them**: This statement means that the one who testifies to the truth of Lā ilāha illā Allāh and the finality of Muhammad ﷺ as the Messenger, but fails to pray, fast, perform Hajj, or even engages in stealing or fornication, there is no difference between these acts when weighing between practical disbelief (kufr) and the disbelief of rejection (kufr al-'aqīda). There is no difference in the rulings here whether it concerns obligatory acts or prohibited acts; one must perform the obligatory acts and must avoid the prohibited ones. **If someone abandons them out of laziness, he should not be considered a disbeliever. If someone abandons them out of rejection (juhūd), then he is a disbeliever. If someone deems an act of forbidden behavior permissible, then he is also a disbeliever**. There is no distinction here between the obligatory and the prohibited."

Some of those upon irjā' claimed the majority of Ahl al-Hadith maintain that the name of īmān encompasses both obligatory and voluntary acts of worship. They also state; One who commits

[376] Ahkam al Taqrir p.31

major sin but does not deny the act and does not consider it permissible is considered a sinner and not a disbeliever.

The Murji'ah believe anyone who says la ilaha illallah and insists on abandoning salah is still guaranteed paradise equating abandoning obligatory acts to committing forbidden acts, as if they are the same. **The Salaf held that committing forbidden acts without deeming them permissible is a sin, while deliberately abandoning obligatory acts without ignorance or excuse is disbelief.**

Maʿqil ibn ʿUbaydullāh al-ʿAbbāsī said: "I came to Madīnah and sat with Nāfiʿ, and I mentioned to him some of the opinions of the Murji'ah. He replied: 'The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'I have been commanded to strike them with the sword until they say: Lā ilāha illā Allāh.' When they say it, their blood and wealth are protected from me, except for the rights of Allah, and their judgment will be with Allah.' I asked: 'They say: 'We acknowledge that prayer is obligatory but we do not pray, that alcohol is forbidden but we drink it, and that marrying one's mother is forbidden, but we do it.' He replied, 'Whoever does this is a disbeliever.'"[377]

Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمه الله) said in Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/218): The reason the scholars declared disbelief in this matter is that abandoning the obligatory acts—such as ṣalāh, zakāh, ṣawm, and ḥajj—completely, without excuse, is a rejection of Allah's command. It is impossible for a person to not perform anything of what he is commanded (such as ṣalāh, zakāh, ṣawm, and ḥajj) and yet engage in forbidden acts like praying without ablution, or towards a direction other than the qiblah, or committing incestuous relationships with his mother, while still being a believer in his heart. He does not commit these actions except due to the lack of īmān in his heart.

Ḥanbal ibn Isḥāq ibn Ḥanbal said: Al-Ḥumaydī reported to me that some people say: "If someone acknowledges the obligation of ṣalāh, zakāh, ṣawm, and ḥajj but does not do any of them until he dies, or prays with his back turned away from the qiblah until he dies, he is still a believer as long as he does not deny them, as long as he acknowledges them as obligatory and believes in facing the qiblah." I said: "This is outright disbelief in Allah, contrary to the Book of Allah, the Sunnah of His Messenger ﷺ, and the practice of the Muslims. Allah says: "And they were not commanded except to worship Allah, sincere to Him in religion, inclining to truth, and to establish ṣalāh and give zakāh. And that is the correct religion." (Al-Bayyina, 98:5) Al-Ḥanbalī said: "Abū ʿAbdullāh [meaning Imām Aḥmad] and I heard him say: 'Whoever says this has disbelieved in Allah and rejected the command of Allah and the message brought by the Messenger.'" (Sunnah of al-Khallāl, 1014)

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[377] As-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh ibn Aḥmad (806).

Isḥāq ibn Rāhwayh said: "The scholars unanimously agreed that Iblīs (Satan) did not prostrate to Adam because he thought he was superior to Adam. He said: "I am better than him. You created me from fire and created him from clay" (Al-Aʿrāf, 7:12). So, Iblīs was not in doubt that Allah had commanded him, nor did he reject the command of prostration, but he became a disbeliever by abandoning Allah's command and refusing to humble himself to Adam by prostrating. His abandonment was not due to a denial of Allah's command, but rather from pride. Thus, those who abandon ṣalāh in this way are also in a similar position."[378]

Some said: "The one who abandons the obligatory acts, such as fasting during Ramaḍān, zakāh, ḥajj, and all other duties, without rejecting their obligation, we do not declare him a disbeliever. We leave his matter to Allah, since he acknowledges their obligation." These are the Murji'ah (those who have deviated in matters of īmān) and there is no doubt about this.[379]

Ajurrī said: "Actions of the limbs are a confirmation of the īmān in the heart and the tongue. Whoever does not confirm his īmān with actions like purification, ṣalāh, zakāh, ṣawm, ḥajj, jihād, and similar acts, and is satisfied with mere knowledge and speech, is not a true believer. Knowledge and speech alone will not benefit him. His abandonment of actions is a rejection of his īmān . And performing these actions is a confirmation of īmān . Allah has stated in His Book, and has clarified in many places, that īmān is only complete with actions. This was explained by the Prophet ﷺ, contrary to the beliefs of the Murji'ah, whom the devil has misled."[380]

The scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah **have never identified any cause for disbelief other than abandoning the obligatory acts**. They, like others among the Imāms of the Sunnah, have confirmed that committing forbidden acts without deeming them permissible is a sin and immorality, but it is not disbelief or shirk.

Ibn Baṭṭāh said: "Whoever speaks of īmān and openly acknowledges tawḥīd and admits that he is a believer in all the obligatory acts but believes that abandoning them does not harm him and that he will not leave his īmān by neglecting them at their appointed times—such as ṣalāh, zakāh, fasting in Ramadan, and the ḥajj when able—he also believes that it is sufficient to pray during the night for the prayer to count for the day, or that fasting in Shawwāl counts, or that ḥajj in Muḥarram or Ṣafar is valid, and he claims that delaying the ghusl after sexual impurity does not harm him, and that he is still a believer, complete in īmān before Allah, with the same īmān as Jibrīl, Mīkāʾīl, and the closest angels—such a person is a disbeliever, contradicting the

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[378] Taʿẓīm Qadr aṣ-Ṣalāh (997)
[379] as-Sunnah of al-Ḥarb (189).
[380] al-Sharīʿah by Ājurrī (304)

Qur'ān, opposing Allah, His book, His messengers, and the sharīʿah of Islam. There is no difference between such a person and the Munāfiq who were described by Allah in His book. They have had īmān removed from their hearts, as Allah says: 'And when īmān has not entered your hearts' (Al-Ḥujurāt: 14).

Anyone who abandons any of the obligatory acts that Allah has prescribed in His book or that the Messenger ﷺ emphasized in his Sunnah:

If done out of denial or disbelief in the obligation: He is a disbeliever without a doubt, and no one with sound reasoning will disagree with this.

If he acknowledges it with his tongue but leaves it out of negligence, playfulness, or following the views of the Murji'ah (the sect who delay judgment on acts of disobedience), he is a person who has abandoned īmān, and there is no īmān in his heart, whether little or much. He is among the Munāfiq who disbelieved in the Messenger ﷺ, and the Qur'ān describes their fate and their place in the lowest level of Hell. We seek refuge in Allah from the false paths of the Murji'ah ."[381]

Ibn Rajab said: "Many of the scholars from the Ahl al-Ḥadīth held the view that the one who abandons the ṣalāh is a kāfir. This was reported by Isḥāq ibn Rāhwayh as a ijmāʿ among them, to the point that he considered the statement of those who say, "He is not a disbeliever for abandoning these pillars while still acknowledging them"—to be a saying of the Murji'ah .

Likewise, Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah said: "The Murji'ah considered the abandonment of the farā'iḍ (obligatory acts) to be a sin similar to the commission of the muḥarramāt (prohibited acts); yet the two are not the same. Commiting forbidden acts, without deeming them permissible, is a sin; but the abandonment of obligatory acts, without ignorance or a valid excuse, is disbelief." This is clarified by the matter of Ādam and Iblīs, and the Jewish scholars who acknowledged the prophethood of the Prophet ﷺ with their tongues but did not act according to his laws.

It was narrated from 'Aṭā' and Nāfiʿ, the freed slave of Ibn 'Umar, that they were asked about someone who says: "Prayer is obligatory, but I do not pray." They replied: "He is a kāfir." The same was said by Imām Aḥmad. And Ḥarb reported from Isḥāq: "The Murji'ah went to extremes until it became from their views that some of them say: 'Whoever abandons the obligatory prayers, fasting of Ramaḍān, zakāh, ḥajj, and most of the other obligations—without

[381] Al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (1136)

denying their obligation—we do not declare him a kāfir; his matter is left to Allah, since he affirms them.'" These, Isḥāq said, "are undoubtedly Murji'ah ."[382]

And Shaykh sulayman ibn Sahman said: "The seventh matter: He used as evidence in his response regarding the Islam of the Ṣulbah (those who do not pray, pay zakāh, fast, or perform ḥajj, yet testify that there is no deity but Allah and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah, and affiliate themselves with Islam) what is in the two Ṣaḥīḥs (al-Bukhārī and Muslim): that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "I have been commanded to fight the people until they testify that there is no deity but Allah, and that I am the Messenger of Allah. If they say it, they have protected from me their blood and wealth—except by its right—and their reckoning is with Allah." And that merely uttering the two testimonies is sufficient for the protection of wealth and blood, and a person is considered Muslim by that—even if he does not pray, pay zakāh, fast, or perform ḥajj.

This was problematic for ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, so he said: "O Caliph of the Messenger of Allah, how can we fight the people..." (the ḥadīth continues). Abū Bakr replied: "Did he not say: 'Except by its right'? Inaction, zakāh is from its rights. By Allah, if they were to withhold even a young she-goat that they used to give to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, I would fight them for withholding it." ʿUmar said: "By Allah, it was only then that I saw Allah had opened Abū Bakr's chest to the matter of fighting, and I knew it was the truth." So ʿUmar agreed with Abū Bakr, and the Companions—may Allah be pleased with them—all unanimously agreed upon this. They fought those who withheld zakāh and classified them among the people of apostasy. So how then with one who also adds to that the abandonment of prayer, fasting, and ḥajj? He is more deserving of being declared a disbeliever and apostate from Islam than one who abandoned only zakāh. Thus, this contradicts what the Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ unanimously agreed upon regarding the takfīr of such people, and instead considers them Muslim merely by uttering the two testimonies."[383]

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[382] Fatḥ al-Bārī by Ibn Rajab (1/23)
[383] ad-Durar al-Saniyyah (10/495)

The Murji'ah claim - There is no hypocrisy in this Ummah

When they excluded actions from īmān it leads to no hypocrisy because in their view one is a complete believer, his abandoning of actions or his committing of prohibitions does not affect his imaan in the slightest. This contradicts ijmāʿ of the Salaf for they used to fear hypocrisy upon themselves.

Sufyān al-Thawrī said: "The difference between us and the Murji'ah is in three matters: (a) We say: īmān is speech and action; they say: īmān is only speech, not action. (b) We say: īmān increases and decreases; they say: it neither increases nor decreases. (c) We say: there is hypocrisy; they say: there is no hypocrisy."[384]

The statements of the Salaf regarding their fear of hypocrisy are many, including:

Ibn Abī Mulaykah said: "I met more than fifty of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and none of them died except that he feared hypocrisy upon himself." He said: "None of them was pleased to say he had the īmān of Jibrīl." "By the One in whose hand is my soul, even Muḥammad ﷺ did not say that."[385]

Al-Jaʿd Abū ʿUthmān said: "I said to Abū Rajāʾ al-ʿAṭārdī: 'O Abū Rajāʾ, those of the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ whom you met—did they fear hypocrisy for themselves?' He said: *"By the praise of Allah, I met a good number of them, and yes—greatly so.'"[386]

Ṭarīf ibn Shihāb said: "I said to al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī: 'There are people who claim there is no hypocrisy and they do not fear it.' He replied: *"By Allah, for me to know that I am free from hypocrisy is more beloved to me than the earth filled with gold.'"[387]

Muḥammad ibn Salīm said: "A man asked al-Ḥasan: 'Do you fear hypocrisy?' He replied: *"What would secure me from it, when even ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb feared it?'"[388]

Ibn Rajab commented on this: "He (al-Awzāʿī) pointed out that ʿUmar (raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu) feared hypocrisy for himself in his present state. It appears he meant that ʿUmar feared for himself from the minor hypocrisy, and minor hypocrisy is a pathway and stepping-stone to major hypocrisy—just as persistent sin leads to disbelief.

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[384] Ṣifat al-Nifāq by al-Firyābī (87)
[385] Taʿẓīm Qadr al-Ṣalāh (686); al-Sunnah by al-Khallāl (1064)
[386] Taʿẓīm Qadr al-Ṣalāh (686)
[387] al-īmān by Aḥmad (500)
[388] Ṣifat al-Nifāq by al-Firyābī (84)

So, just as one who persists in sin may be deprived of īmān at death, likewise one who persists in traits of hypocrisy is at risk of being stripped of īmān and becoming a true Munāfiq"

And he said (1/195): "This matter goes back to what was previously mentioned—that hypocrisy is of two types: major and minor. Minor hypocrisy is hypocrisy in action, which the righteous feared for themselves. It is a gateway to major hypocrisy. It is feared that whoever is dominated by traits of minor hypocrisy during his life may be led thereby into major hypocrisy, until he is stripped of īmān entirely."

Major hypocrisy: When a person outwardly shows belief in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, and the Last Day, while inwardly concealing disbelief in all or some of that. This is the kind of hypocrisy that existed during the Prophet's time, and the Qur'an condemns its people, declaring them disbelievers destined for the lowest depths of the Fire.

Minor hypocrisy — hypocrisy in action: When a person outwardly presents righteousness, but inwardly acts contrary to that.

Statement of Jahmi Murji'ah regarding īmān and the stance of the Salaf regarding them

īmān to them is **only knowledge and affirmation without action and speech**.

Al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ, raḥimahu Allāh, said: "The Jahmiyyah say: īmān is knowledge without speech or action!"[389]

Ibn Taymiyyah, raḥimahu Allāh, said, speaking about the scandals of the Jahmiyyah regarding īmān: "They claimed that someone who never expresses īmān verbally, despite having the ability to do so, and even if he outwardly obeys Allāh with visible acts of obedience—which are obligatory upon him and within his capacity—is still a complete believer in Allāh and blessed in the Hereafter. These scandals are unique to the Jahmiyyah and not shared by the Murji'ah among the jurists and others."[390]

Many later generation adopted this. Many scholars takfir'd them regarding this.

Wakīʿ said: "The Jahmiyyah said: knowledge in the heart of what has come from Allāh suffices in place of speech and action. This is kufr."[391]

He also said: "The Jahmiyyah say: īmān is knowledge in the heart. Whoever says that īmān is knowledge in the heart must be asked to repent. If he repents, [fine]; otherwise, his neck is to be struck."[392]

Ḥamdān ibn ʿAlī al-Warrāq said: I asked Aḥmad and the Murji'ah were mentioned to him. I said: "They say that if a man knows his Lord in his heart, he is a believer?" He replied: "The Murji'ah do not say this, but the Jahmiyyah do. The Murji'ah say: until he speaks with his tongue, even if his limbs do not act. The Jahmiyyah say: if he knows his Lord in his heart, even if his limbs do not act. This is kufr. Iblīs knew his Lord, and said: 'My Lord, because You have misled me...'" (al-Ḥijr: 39)[393]

Abū ʿUbayd said: "Then a third group emerged, deviating from both of the previous groups. They were neither from the people of knowledge nor religion. They said: īmān is knowledge in

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[389] As-Sunnah by ʿAbdullāh (579)
[390] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/583)
[391] As-Sunnah by ʿAbdullāh (399)
[392] As-Sunnah by al-Khallāl (1762)
[393] As-Sunnah by al-Khallāl (967) and (1761)

the heart of Allāh alone, even if there is no speech or action. This is, in our view, outside the fold of the ḥanīfiyyah religion, as it opposes the words of Allāh and His Messenger, rejecting and denying them."[394]

Abū ʿAbd Allāh al-Marwazī said: "The entire body of the Murji'ah agrees with us that verbal confession is part of īmān—except for a faction among the Jahmiyyah whom we and the Murji'ah consider disbelievers. They claimed that īmān is only knowledge, even after Allāh testified about certain people whom He named as disbelievers that they had knowledge [of Him] in their hearts. Thus they contradicted Allāh's report and called the one who denies with his tongue but knows with his heart a believer."[395]

They were led astray by faulty reasoning, applying analogies to the religion.

Ājurrī said: "Whoever says that īmān is merely knowledge without speech and action has said something worse than the one who claims īmān is only speech. Such a person would be forced to say that Iblīs is a believer, since he knew his Lord and said: 'My Lord, because You have misled me...' (al-Ḥijr: 39), and said: 'My Lord, grant me respite...' (al-Ḥijr: 36)." And by their logic, the Jews—with their knowledge of Allah and His Messenger—would have to be considered believers. Allah the Exalted said: "They recognize him just as they recognize their own sons" [al-Baqarah: 146]. So He informed us that they know Allah and His Messenger.

It is said to them: What then is the difference between Islam and disbelief? We already know that the disbelievers have recognized with their minds that Allah created the heavens and the earth and all that is between them. None saves them from the darkness of land and sea except Allah, and when hardships befall them, they call upon none but Allah. So according to their view—that īmān is mere knowledge—all of these would be believers. Upon the one who utters this repulsive claim be the curse of Allah. Rather, we say—and all praise is due to Allah—a statement that aligns with the Book, the Sunnah, and the scholars of the Muslims, whose mention brings no discomfort—and we have already mentioned some of them: That īmān is knowledge in the heart, with firm and certain belief; speech with the tongue; and action with the limbs. A person is not a believer unless he possesses all three. None of them suffices in place of the others. And all praise is due to Allah for that."[396]

Ibn Taymiyyah said: As for the two testimonies of īmān (shahādatayn), if a person does not utter them despite having the ability, then he is a disbeliever (kāfir) by consensus of the Muslims. He is a disbeliever both inwardly and outwardly according to the Salaf of the Ummah,

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[394] al-Īmān by Abū ʿUbayd al-Qāsim ibn Sallām (27)
[395] Taʿẓīm Qadr aṣ-Ṣalāh (2/700)
[396] ash-Sharīʿah (373)

its Imāms , and the majority of its scholars. A group from the Murji'ah, who are Jahmiyyah Murji'ah—such as Jahm, al-Sāliḥī, and their followers—claimed that if a person affirms with his heart, then he is only a disbeliever outwardly, not inwardly. The root of this belief has already been pointed out, and it is an innovation (bidʿah) in Islam that none of the Imāms ever said."[397]

He also said: This view, though it is the most corrupt statement ever made concerning īmān, was adopted by many theologians from the Murji'ah. The Salaf, such as Wakīʿ ibn al-Jarrāḥ, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, Abū ʿUbayd, and others, declared as disbelievers those who hold this view. They said: Iblīs is a kāfir by the explicit text of the Qur'an, and his disbelief was due to his arrogance and refusal to prostrate to Ādam—not because he denied the truth of a report. Likewise, Pharaoh and his people: Allah said about them: "They denied them, while their souls were convinced of them, out of injustice and arrogance" [al-Naml: 14].[398]

[397]Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/609)
[398]Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/189)

Agreement of Ashāʿirah and Jahmiyyah on īmān

The agreement is clear and unmistakable. **To them īmān is: Tasdiq of heart. Statement of tongue is only a condition for applying worldly rulings upon a person. Actions of the limbs are not part of īmān, they only mean it is a condition, īmān is valid without it.**

The statement of jahmiyyah that īmān is knowledge and the statement of Ashāʿirah that īmān is tasdiq (affirmation) have no real difference.

Ibn Taymiyyah said: "The distinction between 'knowledge of the heart' and mere 'tasdīq of the heart' that is devoid of submission—which they label as the 'statement of the heart'—is subtle. Most rational people deny it. And even if it is a valid distinction, it's not obligatory for everyone to accept two concepts whose difference cannot be grasped. Most people cannot discern the difference between 'maʿrifah of the heart' and its 'tasdīq,' and they say: what was claimed by Ibn Kullāb and al-Ashʿarī of a difference is false talk with no basis. Many of their own companions admitted the lack of any real distinction."[399]

Here are some statements that the Ashāʿirah agree with Jahmiyyah regarding īmān:

1. Abū al-Qāsim al-Zanjānī, in his commentary on his didactic poem on Sunnah (p. 106): "As for the Murji'ah, they are from the early deviant sects, and they are of various types, with many subtle differences: a. Some say īmān is 'statement and belief'—the view of al-Murīsī. b. Others say īmān is 'knowledge of Allah'—that is, to know of His existence. This is the view of Jahm and al-Ashʿarī, and it is the most wicked of these views."

2. Al-Sijzī, in his Risālah ilā Ahl Zubayd (p. 274): "They [i.e., the Ashʿarīs] say: īmān is tasdīq (affirmation). According to their principles, someone who affirms with his heart but does not utter with his tongue is still a believer—for two reasons: First: Their foundational belief is that īmān is maʿrifah, just as Jahm said. Second: That speech is merely a meaning within the soul—so if the heart affirms, then he has, in their view, 'spoken'. But Ahl al-Athar say: īmān is statement and action, it increases and decreases. The scholars of the lands who follow the truth are all upon this. Our opponents [i.e., the Ashʿarīs] outwardly say the same as us, but in their view tasdīq admits of no increase or decrease—and that is īmān to them."

3. Ibn Ḥazm said:"No one is permitted to say about a kāfir who affirms with his heart and tongue that Allah is true, and who believes in his heart that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah—that he is a mu'min, nor that he possesses any īmān at all—until he fulfills what Allah

[399] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/398)

has defined as īmān: belief in the heart and on the tongue that 'Lā ilāha illā Allāh, Muḥammad rasūl Allāh,' and that everything the Prophet came with is true, disavowing every religion other than his, and continuing upon that belief until death. Still, we say: a kāfir may have tasdīq in Allah—affirming Him with that tasdīq—but that does not make him a mu'min, nor is there in him any īmān as Allah has commanded, not as Jahm and al-Ashʿarī have claimed. So this statement—whose proponent is unanimously declared a disbeliever—has been refuted. Abū ʿUbayd al-Qāsim clearly stated their takfīr in his well-known Risālah fī al-īmān and others as well."[400]

4. Al-ʿImrānī said: "The Ashʿarīs hold that the legal (sharʿī) definition of īmān is only the affirmation of the heart and nothing more."[401]

5. Ibn Taymiyyah said: "As for al-Ashʿarī, what is known from him and his followers is that they agreed with Jahm regarding īmān—that it is merely the affirmation of the heart or its knowledge. However, they may also display the view of Ahl al-Ḥadīth outwardly and interpret it to suit their own position."[402]

Ibn Taymiyyah said: As for Jahm, he used to say that īmān is merely the heart's taṣdīq (affirmation), even if not uttered verbally. This view is not known from any of the scholars (ʿulamāʾ) or Imāms of the ummah. Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, Wakīʿ, and others declared kāfir (disbeliever) the one who held this opinion. However, this is the view that al-Ashʿarī and most of his followers supported. Yet they added: "Everyone whom the Sharīʿah rules as a kāfir, we too rule as a kāfir, and we infer by the Sharʿī takfīr that his heart lacks maʿrifah (knowledge)."[403]

Ibn Taymiyyah also said: "Through this and other reasoning, the falsehood of the opinion of Jahm, al-Ṣāliḥī, and those who followed them regarding īmān becomes clear, as well as the opinion of al-Ashʿarī in his most famous statements, most of his followers, and a group from the later followers of Abū Ḥanīfah such as al-Māturīdī and others, who considered īmān to be merely a taṣdīq in the heart, equating all worshippers in this regard."[404]

1. Al-Ashʿarī said: "īmān is the taṣdīq (affirmation) of the heart. As for the statement by the tongue and actions by the limbs, these are merely branches. Whoever affirms with his heart, i.e., acknowledges the oneness of Allāh and accepts the messengers' truthfulness in what they

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[400] al-Faṣl by Ibn Ḥazm (3/115)
[401] al-Intiṣār (3/736)
[402] al-Nubuwwāt (1/580)
[403] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (13/47)
[404] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/582)

brought from Allāh, his īmān is valid, even if he were to die immediately, he would be considered a believer who has achieved salvation."[405]

2. He also said: "The second group of the Murji'ah claim that īmān is only maʿrifah (knowledge) of Allāh, and kufr is only ignorance of Him. There is no īmān in Allāh except the knowledge of Him, and no kufr except the ignorance of Him."[406] This view was expressed by Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Ṣāliḥī.

3. Al-Bāqilānī: He maintained that īmān is taṣdīq in the heart that Allah is One.

Ibn Taymiyyah states: "Al-Qāḍī Abū Bakr al-Bāqilānī supported the view of Jahm regarding īmān, following Abū Ḥasan al-Ashʿarī, as did most of his followers."[407]

4. Al-Āmīdī (631 AH) said: "In the understanding of Ahl al-Ḥaqq (the people of truth among the mutakallimīn), īmān refers to taṣdīq (affirmation) of Allah, His attributes, and the teachings of His Prophets. One who is guided to this affirmation is a true believer, both with Allah and among people. If not, then he is among the most miserable and his kufr (disbelief) is judged both in this world and the Hereafter. īmān is not simply the declaration of the tongue as the Karrāmiyyah falsely claimed, nor the observance of acts of worship as the Khārijites asserted."[408]

Abd al-Malik al-Juwaynī mentioned: "The acceptable view among us is that the reality of īmān is taṣdīq of Allah. One who truly believes in Allah is one whose heart affirms, and this affirmation is considered the speech of the soul. However, it is not valid without knowledge, as we clarified that the speech of the soul corresponds to the belief held."[409]

Al-Bājī al-Mālikī al-Ashʿarī said: "The methodology of Ahl al-Sunnah (i.e., the Ashʿarīs) is that īmān is both a statement and an action. They mean that īmān, which leads to salvation from the Fire and entry into Paradise, includes actions, which they call īmān, though in reality these are the sharā'iʿ al-īmān (the rites of īmān) that save one from the Fire through obedience to what Allāh has commanded. True īmān, however, is the taṣdīq."[410]

Al-ʿIzz ibn ʿAbd al-Salām, one of the Imāms of the Ashʿarīs (660 AH), said in his explanation of the reality of īmān that it is the heart's taṣdīq (affirmation) of what the Lord has obligated

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[405] al-Milal wa-l-Niḥal by al-Shahrastānī, 1/101
[406] Maqālāt al-Islāmīyīn (p. 133)
[407] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/119)
[408] Ghāyat al-Marām (p. 309)
[409] al-Irshād (p. 333)
[410] al-Muntaqā (7/205)

affirmation of. This is the true īmān. As for metaphorical īmān: it is the performance of every ṭāʿa (act of obedience) and the avoidance of every maʿṣiya (sin), because both are caused by true īmān. True īmān resides in the heart, while metaphorical īmān resides in the limbs.[411]

Al-Qurṭubī al-Mālikī al-Ashʿarī (656 AH) said: "īmān in Allah is the taṣdīq of His existence, that non-existence is impossible for Him, and that He is described with the attributes of majesty and perfection. Then he mentioned the pillars of īmān and said: The madhhab of the Salaf and the juristic Imāms of the Khalaf is that whoever affirms these matters with a firm, unwavering taṣdīq—without doubt, hesitation, or pause—is truly a muʾmin (believer)."[412]

Al-Asfarāʾīnī said: "The correct view regarding the meaning of taṣdīq is that which conforms to the language, because the obligation of īmān was revealed in accordance with the language. īmān in Allah and His Messenger, according to the language, is the ʿilm (knowledge) that Allah and His Messenger are truthful in all that they have informed. īmān in language, in general, is the iʿtiqād (belief) in the truthfulness of the one who informs. However, the sharīʿa considered this taṣdīq to be ʿilm, and it is not sufficient for it to be mere belief without knowledge, because the one who affirms a liar and believes him has technically believed in him. For this reason, it was said regarding the Jews: "They believe in al-jibt and al-ṭāghūt" [al-Nisāʾ: 51], meaning: they believe in their truthfulness."[413]

Al-Rāzī said: "There is no disagreement that īmān, in its original linguistic meaning, refers to taṣdīq. In the sharʿī (legal) sense, it refers to taṣdīq in the Messenger regarding all that is known by necessity that he brought. This is contrary to the Muʿtazila, who considered it a name for acts of obedience, and contrary to the Salaf, who said that it is a name for taṣdīq in the heart, verbal acknowledgment with the tongue, and actions with the limbs."[414]

Al-Jurjānī said in his commentary on al-Mawāqif: "The first discussion regarding the reality of īmān: Know that īmān in language is unrestricted taṣdīq. As for its sharʿī sense, which relates to the aforementioned rulings (i.e., reward for the detailed elements), it is, according to us (i.e., the followers of Abū al-Ḥasan), and most Imāms like al-Qāḍī and al-Ustādh agreed, as did al-Ṣāliḥī and Ibn al-Rāwandī of the Muʿtazila: taṣdīq in the Messenger concerning what is known by necessity to have been brought by him—detailed taṣdīq in what is known in detail, and general taṣdīq in what is known in general. So in the sharʿī sense, it is a specific kind of taṣdīq. And it was also said: īmān is maʿrifa of Allah—this is the madhhab of Jahm ibn Ṣafwān."[415]

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[411] Al-Fatāwā al-Mawṣiliyya, p. 71; Maʿnā al-īmān wa al-Islām, p. 9)
[412] al-Mufhim (1/145)
[413] Al-Tisʿīnīyya (2/651)
[414] Muḥaṣṣal Afkār al-Mutaqaddimīn wa al-Mutaʾakhkhirīn (p. 567)
[415] Sharḥ al-Mawāqif, 8/351; see also: al-Mawqif by al-Ījī, p. 384, as quoted in al-īmān ʿinda al-Salaf, 1/228

Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Saʿīd al-Ghaznawī al-Ḥanafī (d. 593 AH) said: "And I believe that true īmān is the affirmation (taṣdīq) of the heart, and that this is the īmān obligated upon the servant. Verbal declaration is for manifesting what lies in the heart so that Islamic rulings can be applied to the person. Whoever brings the heart's affirmation is a believer in his relationship with Allah Most High, and whoever brings both affirmation and verbal declaration is a believer both before Allah and among the people." [416]

Al-Laqqānī said in his Naẓm al-Jawharah: "īmān has been defined as affirmation (taṣdīq),
And there is disagreement about the necessity of verbal expression."

His son ʿAbd al-Salām explained in his commentary Itḥāf al-Murīd: "(īmān has been defined)"—meaning its definition according to the majority of the Ashʿarīs, Māturīdīs, and others—"as taṣdīq," which is the affirmation required by the Sharīʿah: to affirm that our Prophet Muḥammad is truthful in all that is known necessarily to have been brought by him from the religion. Then he clarified the disagreement regarding verbal declaration (nūṭq) of the two testimonies. It applies only to one who is able to do so. As for the one who is incapable, like a mute person or someone who dies before speaking without delay, he is a believer and saved. He said: the verified opinion of the Ashʿarīs, Māturīdīs, and others is that verbal declaration by one who is able is a condition for applying the worldly rulings of believers, since these rulings are linked to that condition. This is the understanding of the majority. Therefore, whoever affirms with his heart but does not verbally declare without an excuse or out of obstinacy is a believer in the sight of Allah but not in worldly rulings. Conversely, one who declares verbally but does not affirm inwardly, like a Munāfiq, the opposite applies—until we come to know his inward state, at which point we judge him as a disbeliever.

Al-Bājūrī said regarding the opinion that verbal declaration is a condition for the validity of īmān: "This is a weak view, just as the opinion that it is part of īmān itself is weak. The sound opinion is that it is a condition only for the application of worldly rulings. It is, upon verification, a completion (kamāl) of īmān."[417]

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[416] Uṣūl al-Dīn (p. 251)

[417] Ḥāshiyat al-Bājūrī ʿalā Matn al-Sanūsiyyah, p. 57, as quoted in al-īmān ʿinda al-Salaf, 1/231

Disbelief according to the Murji'ah of the Jahmiyyah can only occur through denial and inward istihlal

The Salaf have unanimously agreed that īmān is 3 (action, speech, belief) and kufr can occur through any of the 3. The Jahmi Muji'ah and its likes; Ashāʿirah etc, opposed this ijmāʿ. They made īmān only knowledge and affirmation and kufr is only by inward disbelief or istihlal in the heart.

They don't takfir those who revile Allah, his religion, prostrate to graves, dishonour the mushaf etc because actions of the body are not related to īmān, actions are only a sign which may indicate inward disbelief.

Ibn Taymiyyah said: "These who say what Jahm and al-Ṣāliḥī said, have clearly stated that insulting Allah and His Messenger, speaking of the Trinity, and every word of disbelief is not itself inward kufr—but only an outward sign of disbelief. It is possible, in their view, that the one insulting and reviling is inwardly knowledgeable of Allah, affirming His oneness, and a believer in Him. When they are presented with a text or consensus proving that such a person is a disbeliever both inwardly and outwardly, they respond by saying: 'That implies that such actions necessarily entail inward denial, and that īmān necessarily excludes such things.'"[418]

Some contemporaries have fallen into this error who claim to agree with the Salaf **yet confine kufr to istihlal and juhūd**. Others argue actions are merely a condition for perfection of īmān or merely a branch and ones īmān is valid without actions - yet they also claim kufr can occur through all 3 pillars of īmān. Some Statements which have influenced many scholars are:

Al-Ṭaḥāwī said: "His entering into Islam was through his declaration of it, and likewise his apostasy does not occur except through denying Islam."[419]

This text was used as evidence by Sh. al-Albānī in his ruling on the one who abandons ṣalāh. He said: "This is sound understanding and strong speech that cannot be refuted."

Al-Ṭaḥāwī also said in his ʿAqīdah Ṭaḥāwīyyah: "The servant does not leave īmān except by rejecting that which made him enter into it."

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[418] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/557)
[419] Mushkil al-Āthār (8/204)

Sh. Al-Albānī also affirmed this in his commentary, saying: "This is in response to the Khawārij in their view that one exits īmān by committing a major sin."

As for Shaykh Ibn Bāz, he did not affirm this statement of al-Ṭaḥāwī. He said: "This limitation is questionable! For the disbeliever enters into Islam by the two testimonies of īmān if he is able to pronounce them. If he cannot pronounce them, he enters Islam by repenting from that which caused his disbelief. And one may exit Islam not only through denial, but through many other reasons clarified by the scholars in the chapter of the ruling on the apostate (bāb ḥukm al-murtadd), such as: reviling Islam, or the Prophet, or mocking Allah, His Messenger, His Book, or any part of His Sharīʿah—due to His saying: "Say: Is it Allah and His signs and His Messenger that you were mocking? Make no excuse—you have disbelieved after you had believed." [al-Tawbah: 65–66]

Among the causes of apostasy is also worshipping idols, calling upon the dead, seeking aid from them, asking them for help or provision, and the like. These acts contradict the statement lā ilāha illā Allāh, which affirms that worship is the sole right of Allah—including supplication, seeking aid, bowing, prostration, sacrifice, vows, and the like. Whoever directs any of these acts to other than Allah, whether idols, statues, angels, jinn, or the dead, has committed shirk and nullified lā ilāha illā Allāh. These matters expel one from Islam by the consensus of the scholars, and they are not classified as juhūd (denial). Their evidences are well known from the Qur'ān and Sunnah, and there are many other matters that invalidate one's Islam which are not called juhūd—these are detailed by the scholars in the chapter on the apostate. Refer to them if you wish. And Allah grants success."[420]

Ibn al-Rāwandī and Bishr al-Marisī said: "īmān is affirmation by the heart and tongue together, and kufr is denial and rejection. As for prostration to the sun, the moon, or an idol—it is not kufr in itself, but a sign of kufr."[421]

Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ashʿarī said: "īmān is affirmation in the heart. As for speech of the tongue and actions of the limbs—they are its branches... and one does not exit from īmān except by denying something from that."[422]

ʿIyāḍ al-Mālikī said: "My position is that kufr in Allāh is al-jahl (ignorance) of His existence, and īmān in Allāh is ʿilm (knowledge) of His existence. No one is deemed a kāfir due to a mere statement or opinion—unless that statement itself is jahl billāh (ignorance of Allāh). If a person commits a statement or action which Allāh and His Messenger, or the Muslims by consensus,

[420] Majmūʿ Fatāwā Ibn Bāz (2/83)
[421] al-Milal wa al-Niḥal by al-Shahrastānī, 1/144)
[422] al-Milal wa al-Niḥal, 1/101

have stated that no one does except a kāfir, or there is evidence for that, then he is a kāfir—not simply for the statement or act—but due to the kufr that accompanies it."[423]

al-Bayhaqī said: "So when īmān in Allāh or His Messenger is iʿtirāf (acknowledgment) of Him and affirmation of Him, then kufr is juhūd (denial), negation of Him, and takdhīb (disbelieving) in Him."[424]

al-Nasafī said: "al-kufr is takdhīb (denial) and juhūd, and both occur in the heart."[425]

al-Taftāzānī said: "If it is said—someone who disrespects the sharʿ or the shāriʿ (lawgiver), or throws the muṣḥaf in filth, or ties the zunnār (Christian belt) willingly—is a kāfir by consensus, even if he believes the Prophet ﷺ in everything he brought... We reply: Even if we assume the coexistence of the taṣdīq (affirmation) necessary for īmān with these actions that are unquestionably kufr, it is still valid for the sharʿ to make certain violations of the sharʿ an indication of takdhīb (denial). Hence, whoever commits them is judged a kāfir due to the existence of takdhīb in him, and the absence of taṣdīq from him."[426]

Sh Albani said: "Question: Some reports from the early Imāms and Companions, like Khālid ibn al-Walīd and Imām Aḥmad, indicate that the one who curses Allāh or the Prophet is a kāfir by ridda (apostasy). Is this absolute?

He answered: We do not see it as absolute. It could result from jahl (ignorance), bad upbringing, or heedlessness (ghaflah). Ultimately, if it is done knowingly and intentionally, then it is ridda (apostasy) with no doubt."[427]

Sh. Al-Albānī said: "It is necessary to understand that kufr—like fisq and ẓulm—is divided into two types: First, kufr, fisq, and ẓulm that expel one from the religion, and all of these return to al-istihlāl al-qalbī (inward belief of deeming it permissible). Second, a type that does not expel one from the religion, which returns to al-istihlāl al-ʿamalī (practical or behavioral deeming as permissible)."[428]

He also said: "It is impossible for kufr ʿamalī (practical disbelief) to constitute apostasy unless the kufr has been rooted in the heart of that person as a conviction."[429]

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[423] al-Shifāʾ (2/619)
[424] al-Shuʿab (1/92)
[425] al-Tamhīd p. 100, quoted in al-īmān ʿinda al-Salaf (1/267)
[426] Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid (5/225), quoted from al-īmān ʿinda al-Salaf (1/268)]
[427] Mawsūʿat Aqwāl al-Albānī fī al-ʿAqīdah (4/285)
[428] Fitnat al-Takfīr (p. 1), and in Mawsūʿat Aqwāl al-Albānī fī al-ʿAqīdah (4/277)
[429]Mawsūʿat Aqwāl al-Albānī fī al-ʿAqīdah (4/458)

He also said, in response to the question: What is the ruling on cursing the religion? He replied: It is ḥarām, and whoever deems that permissible in his heart—that is kufr."[430]

He also said: "No doubt this is a form of shirk, but actual takfīr should not be applied unless the ḥujjah (proof) has been established. For example, if you see an Imāms who does not believe in tawḥīd al-ulūhiyyah and worships others besides Allah—calls upon others in hardship, makes vows and sacrifices to others in times of celebration—this is undoubtedly kufr. However, we cannot say he is a kāfir unless we explain the matter to him. These and others like them must not be declared kāfir until the ḥujjah is established. If they reject it, then the words of our Lord apply to them: "And they rejected them, while their souls were convinced thereof" (al-Naml: 14). At that point, we remove them from the fold of Islam without hesitation."[431]

ʿAlī al-Ḥalabī said: "The ruling on abandoned acts must be in accordance with the principle of tarak iʿtiqādī —based on jḥud (rejection), inkār (denial), takdhīb (disbelief), or istihlāl (declaring it permissible)—not mere external abandonment, otherwise this would be the saying of the Khawārij ."[432]

And al-Albānī affirmed his statement.

Al-Albānī also commented on the statement of al-Ṭaḥāwī in his ʿAqīdah: "And we do not declare anyone among the People of the Qiblah to be a kāfir due to a sin, so long as he does not declare it ḥalāl." Meaning: an internal belief of istihlāl. Otherwise, every sinner who deems his sin permissible in practice—i.e., merely commits it—is not a kāfir. Therefore, it is essential to differentiate between one who deems a sin permissible in belief—he is a kāfir by consensus—and one who deems it permissible in action, not belief—he is a sinner deserving of appropriate punishment, unless Allah forgives him, and then his īmān saves him, contrary to the Khawārij and Muʿtazilah.

He also said: "If we see a Muslim, whom we know to be a Muslim, and we witness him stepping on the Qurʾān , there is no doubt that this is a reprehensible act; however, we cannot issue a ruling of takfīr (apostasy) until we verify that, first, he did this act with the intention of insulting the Qurʾān , and that he knows that the book he is stepping on with his foot is the Qurʾān . If he knows that it is the Qurʾān and intends to insult it, then his action is a clear kufr (disbelief) of apostasy. However, as long as there remains the possibility that this book may not be the word of Allah, or that he may not have realized it is the Qurʾān , or that he was mocking

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[430] Mawsūʿat Aqwāl al-Albānī fī al-ʿAqīdah (5/630)
[431] Mawsūʿat Aqwāl al-Albānī fī al-ʿAqīdah (5/542)
[432] al-Taḥdhīr (p. 27)

it with the intention of disrespecting it, while under the possibility that it is the Qurʾān , then if he did this in a fit of anger, he should not be condemned but should rather be disciplined."[433]

These statements itself contradict the ijmāʿ of the Salaf, while claiming affiliation with them. These statements align with the jahmi Murji'ah , the Murji'ah Fuqahāʾ declare takfir based on actions that inherently involve disbelief, since to them such acts are signs and proof of disbelief in the heart, his actions indicate disbelief in his heart even if his speech says otherwise.

The Jahmi Murji'ah go further by requiring intention of disbelief and inner approval of the disbeliever. If a person denies having inward disbelief and istihlal of disbelief then the person is a believer.

Isḥāq ibn Rāhawayh said: "The Muslims are in unanimous agreement that anyone who insults Allah, or insults His Messenger, or denies something from what Allah has revealed, or kills one of His Prophets, is a kāfir because of that, even if he acknowledges all that Allah has revealed."[434]

He also said in a narration from ʿAbd Allāh and Abū Ṭālib: "Whoever insults the Prophet ﷺ is to be killed because insulting him constitutes apostasy from Islām. A Muslim does not insult the Prophet."[435]

Muḥammad ibn Sahnūn, one of the Imāms of the companions of Mālik, said: "The scholars are unanimously agreed that anyone who insults or belittles the Prophet ﷺ is a kāfir, and the threat of Allah's punishment applies to him. The ruling in the ummah is that he must be killed. Anyone who doubts his disbelief or punishment is also a kāfir."[436]

<u>Poor upbringing and anger is not a valid excuse to prevent ruling.</u>

Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī said in his commentary on the verse: "Say: Shall We inform you of the greatest losers in respect of [their] actions? [They are] those whose efforts went astray in the life of this world, while they think that they are doing well in work." [al-Kahf: 103–104]: This is one of the clearest evidences against those who claim that no one disbelieves in Allah except one who intentionally aims at disbelief after knowing His oneness. For Allah, Exalted is He, informed us in this verse about people whose actions were lost in this world, even though they thought they were doing good, and He declared them as those who disbelieved in the signs of their Lord. If the statement of those who claim that no one disbelieves in Allah unless he has

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[433] Mawsūʿat Aqwāl al-Albānī fī al-ʿAqīdah (5/658)
[434] Ṣārim al-Maslūl (955/3), Taʿẓīm Qadr al-Ṣalāh (994)
[435] Ṣārim al-Maslūl (3/956)
[436] Ṣārim al-Maslūl (3/955)

knowledge were true, then these people—about whom Allah said they thought they were doing good—should have been rewarded. But the reality is contrary to what they say. Allah, Glorified be His praise, declared them kāfirūn and that their actions are rendered null and void."[437]

Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal said in his letter to someone who asked him about al-irjāʾ : "He would be required to say that if a man affirms belief [in his heart], and then ties the zunnār (Christian belt) around his waist, prays to the cross, enters churches and synagogues, and performs all the acts of the People of the Book—so long as he confesses belief in Allah—then, according to them, he is still a believer. And these are among the most heinous consequences of their view."[438]

Ibn Taymiyyah said: "What Imām Aḥmad stated is among the strongest proofs against them. He brought together in that statement what others merely mentioned in fragments. Their position is inescapable. That is why when their speaker—like Jahm and those who followed him—realized that this was a necessary consequence of their doctrine, they accepted it and said: Even if one does all the outward actions of disbelief, he is not a kāfir inwardly; rather, these are merely signs of kufr in worldly rulings. And when they are challenged with texts that affirm a person is a kāfir in the Hereafter, they respond by saying these texts indicate that inwardly he has no knowledge of Allah at all. To them, it's one and the same. Thus, they opposed both sound reason and explicit revelation."[439]

Imām Al-Barbahārī said: "We do not expel anyone from the people of the qiblah from Islām until he rejects a verse from the Book of Allah, or rejects something from the narrations of the Messenger of Allah, or sacrifices to other than Allah, or prays to other than Allah. If he does any of these, it becomes obligatory upon you to declare him outside of Islām. If he does none of that, he is a believing Muslim in name but not in reality."[440]

Ibn Ḥazm said: "As for reviling Allāh, there is not a single Muslim on the face of the earth who disagrees that it is kufr mujarrad (absolute disbelief)—except the Jahmiyyah and the Ashʿariyyah, two sects that are not considered reliable. They explicitly state that reviling Allāh and openly declaring kufr is not in itself kufr. Some among them say: it is merely an indication that the person holds kufr in his heart, not that he is certainly a kāfir just for reviling Allāh.

Their foundation in this matter is a corrupt principle that departs from the ijmāʿ of the people of Islām: namely, that īmān is only affirmation in the heart—even if someone openly declares

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[437] Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī (15/428)
[438] al-Sunnah by al-Khallāl (1084)
[439] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/401)
[440] Sharḥ al-Sunnah by Imām Al-Barbahārī (41)

kufr, and worships idols, without coercion or quoting another, but does so by choice—yet is still, according to them, a Muslim?

This is absolute kufr, because it contradicts the consensus of the Ummah, the ruling of Allāh the Exalted and His Messenger, and of all the Companions and those who came after them. No one—neither believer nor disbeliever—disagrees that this Qur'ān is what Muḥammad ﷺ brought, and that it is a revelation from Allāh the Exalted.

Nor have they differed in the fact that it explicitly labels certain speech as kufr, and that it definitively rules kufr upon those who utter certain well-known statements—such as His saying, "Surely they have disbelieved who say, 'Inaction, Allāh is the Messiah, son of Mary'" [al-Mā'idah: 17], and His saying, "Inaction, they said the word of kufr, and disbelieved after their Islām" [al-Tawbah: 74]. Thus, it is clear that kufr can consist of speech."[441]

While this is a sound statement from Ibn Ḥazm, be wary as he opposes the Salaf by nullifying actions as a pillar of īmān, the names and attributes of Allah and other topics.

Ibn Taymiyyah said: "Whoever says or does something that is kufr—he becomes a disbeliever by that, even if he did not intend to become a kāfir; for no one intends disbelief except those whom Allāh wills."[442]

He also said: "Reviling Allāh or reviling His Messenger is kufr both outwardly and inwardly—whether the reviler believes that it is forbidden, or considers it permissible, or is heedless of its ruling. This is the view of the jurists and all the people of the Sunnah who say that īmān is both statement and action."

He said: The claim attributed to the jurists that if a person deems it permissible then he is a disbeliever, otherwise not—this has no basis. Rather, al-Qāḍī transmitted it from a book written by some theologians who attributed it to the jurists. These people transmitted the opinion of the jurists based on what they assumed to be consistent with their own principles, or what they heard from some who are affiliated with fiqh—but whose opinions are not considered valid. We have quoted the texts of the Imāms of the jurists and the consensus reports from those most knowledgeable of their schools—so no one should imagine that this matter is one of legitimate difference of opinion or ijtihād. Rather, this is a mistake, and no one can accurately attribute such a distinction to a single Imām among the jurists who issue fatwā.

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[441] al-Muḥallā by Ibn Ḥazm 12/435
[442] al-Ṣārim al-Maslūl (2/339)

And once it is clear that the view of the Salaf of the Ummah and those who followed them is that this statement itself is kufr—whether the one who uttered it deemed it permissible or not—then the proof for this is everything we have already presented in the first issue regarding the kufr of the reviler, such as His saying: "And among them are those who harm the Prophet..." [al-Tawbah: 61], and His saying: "Inaction, those who harm Allāh and His Messenger..." [al-Aḥzāb: 57], and His saying: "Do not make excuses—you have disbelieved after your belief" [al-Tawbah: 66], as well as the ḥadīths and reports we have cited. These are all clear proofs that merely offending Allāh and His Messenger is kufr in and of itself, regardless of whether one believes it to be forbidden."[443]

He said: "So whoever says a word of kufr with his tongue, without necessity, deliberately, and knowing it to be a word of kufr, then he is a disbeliever outwardly and inwardly. It is not permissible to say: "Inwardly, he might still be a believer." Whoever says that has departed from Islām. Allāh said regarding those who mocked: "Do not make excuses—you have disbelieved after your belief" [al-Tawbah: 66]. He made clear that they are disbelievers because of their speech—even though they did not believe in its truth."[444]

He said: "This shows that they did not believe themselves to have committed kufr, but thought that what they did was not kufr. Yet Allāh clarified that mocking Him, His signs, and His Messenger is kufr that renders its doer a disbeliever after having been a believer. This indicates that they had weak īmān, and so committed this forbidden act which they knew was prohibited—but did not think it was kufr—and yet it was, and they disbelieved because of it. They did not believe it was permissible."[445]

And he said: "This is a matter that must be clarified. It should be known that the claim that the kufr of the one who reviles (God) is in reality due only to his deeming it permissible (istihlāl) is a disgraceful slip and a serious blunder. Those who fell into this pitfall were influenced by the words of a group from the later generations of theologians, namely the effeminate Jahmiyyah, who followed the path of the early Jahmiyyah in saying that īmān is nothing but the belief in the heart—even if not accompanied by speech of the tongue or action in the heart or on the limbs."[446]

Ibn al-Qayyim said: "The branches (shuʿab) of īmān are of two types: verbal and actionable. Likewise, the branches of kufr are of two types: verbal and actionable.

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[443] al-Ṣārim al-Maslūl (1/955)
[444] al-Ṣārim al-Maslūl (3/579)
[445] al-Ṣārim al-Maslūl (7/273)
[446] al-Ṣārim al-Maslūl (3/957)

Among the verbal branches of īmān are some, whose absence results in the complete loss of īmān. Similarly, among its actionable branches are those, whose absence also causes the loss of īmān.

The same applies to the verbal and actionable branches of kufr. Just as a person may disbelieve by uttering a statement of kufr by choice—and that is one branch of kufr—so too can one disbelieve by committing an action that is a branch of it, such as prostrating to an idol, or disrespecting the Muṣḥaf. This is a foundational principle.

Another foundational principle is that the reality of īmān is composed of speech and action.

Speech is of two kinds: speech of the heart, which is belief (iʿtiqād), and speech of the tongue, which is the utterance of the statement of Islām.

Action is of two kinds: action of the heart, which includes intention and sincerity; and action of the limbs. When these four are all absent, īmān in its entirety is gone. And if the belief of the heart is absent, then the rest of the components are of no benefit, for belief of the heart is a condition for the validity and benefit of the others.

If the action of the heart is absent while one believes with certainty, this is the battleground between the Murji'ah and the people of the Sunnah.

The people of the Sunnah unanimously agree that īmān vanishes in such a case, and that belief alone does not avail when the action of the heart—love and submission—is absent. This did not benefit Iblīs, Pharaoh, his people, the Jews, and the polytheists, all of whom believed in the truth of the Messenger (ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa-sallam), and even acknowledged it openly and secretly. They would say: "He is not a liar, but we will not follow him or believe in him."

So, if īmān disappears with the absence of the heart's action, then it is not surprising that it should also disappear with the loss of the greatest outward acts—especially when such loss necessarily implies the absence of the heart's love and submission, which in turn implies the absence of firm belief."[447]

Ibn al-Qayyim said in al-Nūniyyah 2/217:

And likewise irjāʾ —when you affirm the
Lord—you become, in their view, of perfect īmān !

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[447] al-Ṣalāh (p. 86)

Then throw the Musḥafs into latrines, and destroy
The Sacred House, and strive hard in sinning.
Kill every monotheist if you're able,
Then seek blessing from the cross and the crucifix.
Revile all the messengers and those
Who were sent by Him—aloud and unashamed.
And if you see stones, fall prostrate to them—
Inaction, bow before idols and graven images.
Affirm that Allāh—majestic is His glory—
Alone created the cosmos and what it holds.
Affirm that His Messenger truly came
From Him with revelation and the Qur'ān .
And you'll be a believer, truly, in their eyes—
While all of this is sin upon you, not disbelief!
This is irjā' in the eyes of its extremists—
Every Jahmī is the brother of Shayṭān!

Statement of the Murji'ah: "whoever embraces islam, all his sins are forgiven and turned to good actions, even if he continues upon major sins he used to commit before islam without repenting from it"

Imām Aḥmad and others held that if someone embraces islam from kufr but does not repent from major sins he used to commit before islam and persists after islam, then those sins are not forgiven - he will be held accountable before and after islam!!

They based this on:

What was narrated by al-Bukhārī (6921) and Muslim (120) from ʿAbd Allāh ibn Masʿūd, who said: Some people asked the Messenger of Allāh (peace be upon him): "O Messenger of Allāh, will we be held accountable for what we did in Jāhiliyyah?"

He said: "As for the one who did well in Islām, he will not be held accountable for it. But the one who did evil will be held accountable for his actions in Jāhiliyyah and in Islām."

Al-Bukhārī also included (no. 41): Mālik reported that Zayd ibn Aslam informed him, that ʿAṭāʾ ibn Yasār told him, that Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī told him that he heard the Messenger of Allāh (peace be upon him) say: "If a servant embraces Islām and his Islām is good, Allāh will erase from him every sin he previously committed. After that, there will be requital: a good action will be multiplied tenfold up to seven hundred times, and a bad action will be recorded as one, unless Allāh pardons it."

Ibn Rajab also said: al-Nasāʾī narrated from Abū Saʿīd (may Allāh be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "When a servant embraces Islām and his Islām is good, Allāh writes for him every good action he had done before, and erases from him every bad action he had done before. Then thereafter, the requital applies: a good action will be multiplied ten times up to seven hundred times, and a bad action will be recorded as one, unless Allāh pardons it."[448]

The Intended meaning of the good and bads he had done before islam is what kufr he did before becoming muslim. His good actions he is rewarded for committing in kufr if he embraces islam and the bad actions are erased are on the condition his islam is sound and he avoids those sins after islam.

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[448] Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm wa-al-Ḥikam (1/296)

Supporting this is the ḥadīth found in Ṣaḥīḥayn from Ibn Masʿūd, who said:

We said: "O Messenger of Allāh, will we be held accountable for what we did in Jāhiliyyah?" He said: "As for the one who did well in Islām, he will not be held accountable for it. But the one who did evil will be held accountable for what he did in Jāhiliyyah and in Islām."

In Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, from ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ — he said to the Prophet (peace be upon him) when he accepted Islām: "I want to set a condition." He said: "What condition do you want to set?" I said: "That I be forgiven." He said: "Don't you know that Islām wipes out whatever came before it?" Imām Aḥmad also reported it with the wording: "Islām erases whatever came before it of sins."

This is understood to apply to complete, sound Islām, in order to reconcile it with the ḥadīth of Ibn Masʿūd mentioned earlier.

Ibn Taymiyyah was asked about a Jew or Christian who embraces Islam: "does any sin remain upon him after entering Islam? He answered: If he embraces Islam inwardly and outwardly, then the disbelief (kufr) from which he repented through Islam is forgiven—without any dispute. As for the sins which he did not repent from—such as persisting upon a sin, injustice, or immorality without repenting from it through Islam—some people have said that it is still forgiven through Islam. But the correct view is that only what he repented from is forgiven. As is authentically reported from the Prophet ﷺ, that it was said to him: "Will we be held accountable for what we did in Jāhiliyyah?" He replied: "Whoever excels in Islam will not be held accountable for what he did in Jāhiliyyah. And whoever does evil in Islam will be held accountable for both the former and the latter." Excelling in Islam (ḥusn al-islām) means committing to doing what Allāh has commanded and avoiding what He has prohibited. This is the essence of general repentance. So whoever enters Islam in this way, all his sins are forgiven. This was the Islam of the early forerunners from the Muhājirūn and the Anṣār and those who followed them in goodness. For this reason, the Prophet ﷺ said in the authentic ḥadīth to ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ: "Do you not know that Islam erases what came before it?" — for the definite article in "al-Islām" here refers to the well-known, praiseworthy Islam among them. And his statement: "Whoever does evil in Islam will be held accountable for both the former and the latter," means: if he persists in the sins he used to commit, he will be held accountable for both what he did before and after Islam. This is what the texts and justice necessitate—for whoever repents from a sin, that specific sin is forgiven, but it does not follow that other sins will also be forgiven."[449]

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[449] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (11/702)

Condemnation of the statement; “īmān is created”

Among the newly innovated beliefs by the Jahmiyyah is “īmān is created”. Since īmān encompasses verbal acts such as recitation of Qur’ān , dhikr and affirming Allah's names and attributes and actions and actions done in obedience to Allah, then unconditionally declaring it as created can cause confusion and ambiguity. Imām Aḥmad forbade speaking on this issue, same as the issue of lafẓ being created.

Aḥmad ibn Isḥāq ibn ʿĪsā al-Bazzār said: I heard my father say: A man from Ṣūr known as al-Ṣūrī, a speaker and ascetic in appearance, arrived among us and impressed us. He started raising issues, saying: “īmān is created, zakāh is created, ḥajj is created, jihād is created.” We didn’t know how to respond, so we went to ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Warrāq and told him what had occurred. He said, “I don’t know what this is! Go to Abū ʿAbd Allāh Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, for he is an expert in this field.” So we went to Imām Aḥmad and informed him about what ʿAbd al-Wahhāb told us, and the questions that had been raised. He said, “These are the questions of Jahm ibn Ṣafwān—they number seventy in total. Go and drive this man out from among you.”[450]

Abū Bakr al-Marwazī said: I said to Abū ʿAbd Allāh (Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal): A man in the region has been speaking on this, and people have gathered around him, engaged in debate. They went to ʿAbd al-Wahhāb and others from the scholars, but none of them could answer. They brought a written statement to present to you. So I gave him the note, and in it was written: “Allah created for us intellects, and inspired us with both good and evil, and obligated upon us gratitude for His favors...” Then someone asked the man: “And so our īmān is created? Our prayer is created?” He replied: “Yes. īmān is created. īmān is words and actions, it increases and decreases, and includes intention and following the Sunnah. I only say it is created from the aspect of movement and action—not from the perspective of the statement. Whoever says ‘īmān is created’ and means the statement is a disbeliever. Present my words to Abū ʿAbd Allāh. If I’m wrong, I’ll repent; if I’m right, then praise be to Allah.”

Abū ʿAbd Allāh read until he reached the words: “I only said it was created from the angle of movement and action.” At that point, he threw down the paper and became very angry. He said: “This man should be warned against and not spoken to! This is the speech of Jahm himself. Saying it’s created because of movement? That’s the same as what al-Karābīsī said! What is left if you say ‘īmān is created’? The Prophet ﷺ said: ‘īmān is the testimony that there is no god but Allah’—so is lā ilāha illa Allāh created?” He asked: “Where is this man from? Who is he associating with?” I said: “He’s a stranger.” He said: “Warn the people about him. The

[450] al-Sunnah by al-Khallāl (1686)

people of kalām never succeed." He was extremely upset and commanded that the man be shunned. He added: "Look how he set his 'repentance' ahead of time—'if Aḥmad disapproves, I repent'—yet he still uttered something he thought might be rejected."[451]

Abū Ṭālib reported from Abū ʿAbd Allāh (Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal) regarding īmān: "Whoever says it is created is a Jahmī. And whoever says it is uncreated has innovated. Such a person is to be boycotted until he repents."[452]

Ibn Baṭṭah said: "The correct stance on this is what the people of knowledge were upon: submission to what they said and silence regarding matters the Imāms did not discuss. They are the example, and they were more entitled to speak than we are. So: Whoever says that īmān is created is a disbeliever in Allah the Almighty, because the essence of īmān and its peak is the testimony that there is no god but Allah. And whoever says that it is uncreated is an innovator, because the Qadariyyah claim that the actions and movements of people are not created. The guiding principle in all this is: Submission to what the scholars said, and abstaining from engaging in speech about what the early Imāms did not speak of. They are the leaders, and more worthy of discourse than we are."[453]

Muḥammad ibn Isḥāq ibn Mandah said: "The foundation of īmān is tawḥīd, and it is the statement "Lā ilāha illā Allāh." So whoever claims that īmān is created is effectively claiming that Allah was not One, and that He created tawḥīd and thereby became One — and this is among the statements of the heretics. May Allah thwart them."[454]

Imām Aḥmad made a distinction in this matter in some report:

Ibn Abī Yaʿlā mentioned, in the biography of Ibrāhīm ibn al-Ḥakam al-Qaṣṣār, that he narrated from Imām Aḥmad several things, among them:

He said: Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥanbal was asked, "Is īmān created or not?"
He said: "As for that which is heard (from Allah), it is not created. And as for the actions of the limbs, they are created."[455]

<u>This narration is strange and differs from what is well known about Imām Aḥmad — namely, that he avoided discussing newly introduced terminology which mixes truth with falsehood.</u>

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[451]al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (2536)
[452]Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah, 3/319)
[453]Al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (2538)
[454]Al-Ibāṭīl wa-l-Manākīr p. 51
[455]Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah (1/238)

Ibn Taymiyyah was asked about this issue, and he gave a lengthy answer in which he mentioned the origin of the issue and the disputes surrounding it. Among what he said was: "This issue arose during the fitnah (trial) brought about by the Jahmiyyah concerning the Qur'ān — whether it is created or uncreated. This was the trial faced by Imām Aḥmad and other scholars of the Muslims. Many events occurred which are too lengthy to describe here. When the belief that the Qur'ān is the uncreated speech of Allah became clear, and Allah extinguished the fire of the Jahmiyyah, a group began saying, "The speech of Allah that was revealed is created," expressing this with the word "lafẓ". They began saying: "Our utterances of the Qur'ān are created," or "Our recitation," or "Our reading is created." Their intent was not merely their physical speech and movements, but they included within that the actual speech of Allah that is recited with our voices and movements.

Another group opposed them and said, "Our utterances of the Qur'ān are uncreated." Imām Aḥmad responded to both groups and said: "Whoever says, 'My utterance of the Qur'ān is created,' is a Jahmī. And whoever says, 'My utterance is uncreated,' is an innovator."

Then people began to speak about īmān. A group said: "īmān is created," and they included within that what Allah has spoken of regarding īmān, such as the statement "Lā ilāha illā Allāh". As a result, their statement implied that even this phrase is created and that Allah did not actually say it. Imām Aḥmad declared such people to be innovators and said:
"The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: 'īmān has over seventy branches, the highest of which is the statement Lā ilāha illā Allāh.' So is the statement Lā ilāha illā Allāh created?"

What he meant was: Whoever says that it is completely created implies that Allah did not speak this word — just as the one who says our recitations and utterances of the Qur'ān are created implies that Allah did not speak the Qur'ān that was revealed.

The point here is: This dispute arose among the people of Sunnah and ḥadīth in the two matters of the Qur'ān and īmān due to vague wording and ambiguous meanings.

He then expanded at length about the newly introduced discussions around the Qur'ān and other topics, until he said: What is intended here is to alert to the roots of the differences among Muslims on such issues. When that is understood, it becomes obligatory to affirm what the Book and Sunnah affirm and to deny what they deny. As for vague and ambiguous terms not found in the Qur'ān and Sunnah, they should neither be affirmed nor denied until the intended meaning is clarified.

So, if someone says: “Is īmān created or uncreated?” He should be asked: What do you mean by īmān? If you mean something from the attributes or speech of Allah, such as His statement Lā ilāha illā Allāh, or His being al-Mu’min (the Believer), then this is uncreated.
But if you mean something from the actions or attributes of the created beings (humans), then all human beings are created, and all of their actions and attributes are created. A created being cannot have an eternal uncreated attribute. No one who understands what they are saying would claim that.

So, when clarification and detail are sought, the truth becomes clear, and the path becomes evident. It has been said: “Most of the differences among the intelligent arise from the ambiguity of terms and names. When the details are clarified, the false becomes distinct from the true”[456]

[456]Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (5/655)

The reality of the Murji'ah to Ahl As-Sunnah

The description that unifies all sects of Murji'ah is that they excluded actions from the definition of īmān and **they deem īmān to be sound without considering the necessity of actions. Whoever considers īmān to be valid without action is a murji** – whether they say like the Murji'at al-Fuqahā' who say that īmān is belief and speech or they are those who say īmān is belief, speech and action but action is only a perfection or branch of īmān and a person's īmān is valid without it.

Disagreements between Ahl as-Sunnah and the Murji'ah extended over various topics related to īmān – they are not equal in legal rulings: some may lead to takfīr and others may not. The well known matters between the Salaf and Murji'ah (including Murji'ah Fuqahā'):

- That īmān is a single entity not composed of parts and all believers are equal in it.
- Restriction to īmān to belief and speech.
- Exclusion of actions of the heart.
- Exclusion of actions of limbs.
- īmān does not increase or decrease.
- istithnā' is not permissible as this is doubt.
- One who commits major sin is a believer with complete īmān.
- Murji is someone who does not require performing obligatory duties and avoiding prohibition.

The reality of the Murji'ah according to the Salaf:

Ibrāhīm al-Nakha'ī (d. 96 AH): He said: "I do not know any people more foolish in their views than the Murji'ah , for they say: 'A believer who is astray' and 'A believer who is a sinner'!"[457]

Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī (d. 131 AH): Narrated by Ya'qūb ibn Ibrāhīm al-Dawraqī, who said: 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Mahdī narrated to us from Salām ibn Abī Muṭī', both of them said: "We heard Ayyūb while a man from the Murji'ah was present. The man kept saying: 'It is only belief and disbelief (i.e., no in-between).' Ayyūb remained silent. Then Ayyūb turned to him and said: 'What do you say about the verse: "And others are deferred for the command of Allah: either He will punish them or He will turn to them in mercy" [Surah al-Tawbah, 9:106] — Are they

[457] Al-Sunnah by 'Abd Allāh ibn Aḥmad (700)

believers or disbelievers?'" He (the man) fell silent. Then Ayyūb said: "Go and read the Qur'ān—for every āyah in the Qur'ān that mentions nifāq, I fear it for myself."[458]

Nāfiʿ (d. 117 AH), the mawlā of Ibn ʿUmar: From Maʿqil ibn ʿUbayd Allāh al-ʿAbsī: I arrived in al-Madīnah and sat with Nāfiʿ. I said to him, "Abā ʿAbd Allāh, I have a request for you..." I mentioned that I strike them with the sword until they say: "Lā ilāha illā Allāh." When they say "Lā ilāha illā Allāh," their blood and wealth become inviolable to me—except by its due right, and their reckoning is with Allāh. He began to reveal their sayings—meaning: the Murji'ah . Then Nāfiʿ said: The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: "I have been commanded..." I said: "They say: We affirm that ṣalāh is an obligation, but we do not pray. That khamr is ḥarām, but we drink it. That marrying one's mother is ḥarām, but we do it." He pulled his hand away from mine and said: "Whoever does this is a kāfir."[459]

Ibn Taymiyyah said: "The Imāms declared such a person to be a kāfir because this is a hypothetical situation that does not actually occur. It is impossible for a man to completely abandon all that he has been commanded—such as ṣalāh, zakāh, ṣiyām, ḥajj—while committing all the ḥarām he can, like praying without wuḍū', facing other than the qiblah, marrying his own mother, and yet be a believer inwardly. None does this except due to the absence of īmān in his heart."[460]

Ibn Abī Mulaykah (d. 117 AH) said: 'I am a believer with perfect īmān.' Then it worsened until someone said: 'My īmān is like the īmān of Jibrīl and Mīkā'īl.' Then Shayṭān continued with them until someone said: 'I am a mu'min—even if I were to marry my mother, sister, or daughter.' I met many of the companions of the Prophet ﷺ, and none of them died except that he feared nifāq for himself."[461]

Al-Awzāʿī (d. 157 AH): He said: The Murji'ah say: "The farā'iḍ of Allāh are not part of īmān!" And that īmān can be attained without ʿamal! And that people do not vary in their īmān! And that the righteous and the wicked are equal in īmān!"[462]

Abū Isḥāq al-Fazārī (d. 185 AH): From him: Abū Ḥanīfah used to say: "The īmān of Iblīs and the īmān of Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq are one. Abū Bakr said: 'Yā Rabb,' and Iblīs said: 'Yā Rabb.'" Abū Isḥāq said: Whoever among the Murji'ah does not say this, his entire position collapses."[463]

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[458]Ṣifat al-Nifāq wa Dhamm al-Munāfiqīn by al-Firyābī (86)
[459]Al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh (806)
[460]Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/218)
[461]Al-Lālakā'ī (1568), al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (1122)
[462]Al-Sunnah by al-Khallāl (1025), al-Lālakā'ī (1446)
[463]Al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh (352), al-Lālakā'ī (1661)

Sufyān al-Ṯhawrī (d. 161 AH): He said: “Beware of these ahwāʾ (desires).” It was said to him: “Explain to us, may Allāh have mercy on you.” He said: “As for the Murji’ah, they say that īmān is mere speech without action. Whoever says: ‘I bear witness that there is no deity but Allāh, and that Muhammad is His servant and messenger,’ is a believer who has completed his īmān. His īmān is like that of Jibrīl and the angels, even if he kills this or that believer, even if he abandons the ritual purification, even if he neglects the prayer. And they see the sword against the people of the qiblah.”[464]

He said: “The Murji’ah have disagreed with us on three points: We say that īmān is both speech and action, but they say that īmān is merely speech without action. We say that īmān increases and decreases, but they say that it does not increase or decrease. We say that we are believers by declaration, but they say that we are believers only in the sight of Allāh.”[465]

Yahya ibn Maʿīn said: It was said to Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak: “‘These people say: ‘Whoever does not fast or pray after acknowledging it is a believer with complete īmān.’” Abdullāh replied: “We do not say what they say. Whoever leaves the prayer deliberately without an excuse until it enters another time, he is a kafir.”[466]

Al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ (d. 187 AH): He said: “‘The people of innovation say that īmān is affirmation without action, and that īmān is one, but people differ in their actions and not in īmān.”[467]

And from Ibrāhīm ibn al-Ash’ath, he said: “I heard al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ say: The people of irjāʾ ’ say: ‘īmān is affirmation without action.’ And the Jahmīyah say: ‘īmān is knowledge without speech or action.’ And the people of the Sunnah say: ‘īmān is knowledge, speech, and action.’”[468]

Yūsuf ibn Asbāṭ (d. 195 AH): He said: “As for the Murji’ah, they say that īmān is speech without action. Whoever bears witness that there is no deity but Allāh and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allāh is a believer who has completed his īmān, like the īmān of Jibrīl and Mīkāʾīl, even if he kills this or that believer, abandons the prayer, fasting, or ritual purification after sexual impurity. They even see the sword against the Ummah of Muhammad.”[469]

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[464]Al-Sharīʿah (2286) and al-Lālākāʾī (1663).
[465]al-Ḥilyah (7/29).
[466]Taʿẓīm Qadr aṣ-Ṣalāh (981)
[467]Al-īmān of Aḥmad (15)
[468]Al-Sunnah of Ḥarb (719)
[469] Al-Sunnah of Ḥarb (190)

Yaḥyā ibn Sulaym al-Ṭā'ī (d. 195 AH): Sarīj ibn al-Nuʿmān said: "I asked Yaḥyā ibn Sulaym al-Ṭā'ī while we were behind the Maqām: 'What do the Murji'ah say?' He jumped up in my face and said: 'They say that tawāf around this house is not part of īmān.'"[470]

Wakīʿ ibn al-Jarrāḥ (d. 196 AH): Abdullāh al-Jazarī said: "I heard Wakīʿ say: 'The Murji'ah used to say that īmān is merely speech, and then the Jahmīyah came and said: 'īmān is knowledge.' Abdullāh said: I was informed by Isḥāq ibn Ḥakīm that Wakīʿ said: "This, in our view, is kufr."[471]

Wakīʿ said: The people of the Sunnah say: "īmān is both speech and action." The Murji'ah say: "īmān is speech without action." The Jahmīyah say: "īmān is knowledge."[472]

Abū Rajā' said: I heard Wakīʿ say: "There is not a great difference between the words of the Jahmīyah and the Murji'ah. The Jahmīyah said: 'īmān is knowledge of the heart,' and the Murji'ah said: 'īmān is affirmation by the tongue.'"[473]

'Iṣmah ibn al-Mutawakkil said: I asked Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah about the Murji'ah , and he said: "Whoever claims that prayer and zakāh are not part of īmān is a Murji'ī."[474]

Ibrāhīm ibn Mūsā al-Farrā' al-Rāzī said: "Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah was asked about irjā' and he said: irjā' exists in two forms: A group who postponed the matter of 'Alī and 'Uthmān, and they have passed away. As for the Murji'ah today, they are a people who say: 'īmān is speech without action. Do not sit with them, nor eat with them.'"[475]

Abdullāh ibn Dāwūd (d. 213 AH): 'Alī ibn Yazīd said: I said to Abdullāh ibn Dāwūd: "Who are the Murji'ah?" He replied: "Whoever says, 'My īmān is like the īmān of Jibrīl and Mīkā'īl,' is a vile person and a Murji'ī."[476]

Isḥāq ibn Rāhawayh (d. 238 AH): Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā ibn Khālid asked Isḥāq ibn Rāhawayh about the Murji'ah, and why they were called Murji'ah. He replied: "Because they do not defer the sins to Allah, and they say: 'The believer is forgiven and in Jannah.' Others defer the sins to Allah. It was said to Isḥāq: "Then why are they called Murji'ah when they do not defer the sins

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[470] Al-Sunnah by al-Khallāl (1010)
[471] Al-Sunnah of Ḥarb 168)
[472] Al-īmān by al-'Adnī 29)
[473] Tahdhīb al-Āthār 980)
[474] Al-Sunnah of Ḥarb al-Kirmānī (191)
[475] Tahdhīb al-Āthār (976)
[476] Al-Sunnah of Ḥarb 167)

to Allah, the Blessed and Exalted?" He said: "Al-Nadr ibn Shamīl said: 'They are named so because they say the opposite of what is true, just as the Ḥukmiyyah say: 'There is no judgment but Allah,' and the Qadariyyah say: 'There is no decree,' and if a man were to deny the existence of land, he would be called an 'earth-dweller.'"[477]

Isḥāq ibn Rāhawayh said: "Whoever says: 'I am a believer' is a Murji'ī."[478]

Abū Thawr (d. 240 AH): Abū Thawr said: "As for the group that claimed that actions are not part of īmān, it can be said to them: What did Allah intend for His servants when He said: "Establish prayer and give zakāh"—was it simply acknowledging these or acknowledging and performing them? If they say: "Allah intended only acknowledgment and did not intend actions," then they have disbelieved, according to the scholars who say: "Allah did not want His servants to pray or give zakāh."

If they say: "He wanted both acknowledgment and action," then it can be said: Since He wanted both, why do you claim that someone can be a believer with only one without the other, when He wanted both? Do you see if a man says: "I will do everything Allah commanded, but I will not acknowledge it," would he be a believer?

If they say: "No," it can be said: "Then if he says: 'I acknowledge everything Allah has commanded, but I do none of it,' would he be a believer?"

If they say: "Yes," then it can be asked: What is the difference, since you claim that Allah wanted both? If it is acceptable for a person to be a believer with one (acknowledgment or action) while neglecting the other, it is equally acceptable that if he acts but does not acknowledge, he can also be a believer. There is no difference between these cases.

If he argues that: "If a man becomes Muslim, and acknowledges everything the Prophet ﷺ came with, is he a believer with this acknowledgment before the time to act comes?" It can be said to him: "We give him the title of a believer by his affirmation, believing that the action will be performed at its due time. At that moment, he is not required to acknowledge everything that would make him a believer at that time. If he says: 'I acknowledge but I do not act,' we would not call him a believer." This clarification should suffice, and we ask Allah for guidance."[479]

ʿAmr ibn al-Ḥamdan ibn ʿAli al-Warrāq said: I asked Aḥmad—when the Murji'ah were mentioned—saying: "'They claim that if a man knows his Lord with his heart, then he is a

[477] Asbaq Takhrīj (171)
[478] Al-Sunnah of Ḥarb (188)
[479] Al-Lālakā'ī (1445)

believer." He said: "The Murji'ah do not say this; rather, it is the Jahmiyyah who say this. The Murji'ah say: 'He must speak with his tongue and act with his limbs.' The Jahmiyyah say: 'If he knows his Lord with his heart, even if his limbs do not act.' And this is the disbelief of Iblīs. He knew his Lord, as he said: 'My Lord, because You have led me astray...' (15:39)." I said: "So the Murji'ah were not mistaken when they said this?" He replied: "It is a trial."[480]

Muḥammad ibn Aslam al-Ṭūsī said regarding the Murji'ah: "The Murji'ah say that people differ in actions because they claim that the one who performs more actions is better than the one who does fewer." According to their belief, those who came after the Prophet ﷺ are better than the Prophet ﷺ himself, because they performed more actions like ḥajj, 'umrah, jihād, prayer, fasting, alms, and physical actions. But it is agreed that the Prophet ﷺ is superior to them. Then those who came after Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq and ʿUmar performed many actions that ʿUmar did not perform, but ʿUmar is superior to them.[481]

The Difference between the Murji'ah and Ahl As-Sunnah is that Ahl As-Sunnah believes in the distinction between action of heart and limbs whereas murji based it only on external limbs.

Abū Zurʿah al-Rāzī said in his creed, which contains the consensus of those he encountered: "Whoever says: 'He is truly a believer' is an innovator. Whoever says: 'He is a believer with Allah' is a liar."[482]

Abū Zurʿah al-Rāzī also said in his commentary: "If you see a Kufa person criticizing Sufyān al-Thawrī or Zā'idah, do not doubt that he is a Rāfiḍī. If you see a Syrian criticizing Makḥūl and al-Awzāʿī, do not doubt he is a Nāṣibī. If you see a Basri criticizing Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī and Ibn ʿAwn, do not doubt that he is a Qadari. If you see a Khurāsānī criticizing ʿAbdullāh ibn al-Mubārak, do not doubt that he is a Murji'ī. And know that these factions are united in their hatred of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, for none of them is free of harboring hostility towards him in his heart, which cannot be cured."[483]

Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī said in his creed, which contains the consensus of those he encountered: "Whoever says: 'He is truly a believer' is an innovator. Whoever says: 'He is a believer with Allah' is a liar." He also said: "The sign of the people of innovation is their denigration of the people of ʿĀthar (those who follow the narrations). And the sign of the Murji'ah is that they call

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[480] Al-Sunnah of al-Khallāl (967)
[481] Al-īmān of al-Ṭūsī as found in Al-Jāmiʿ in the books of īmān (2/427)
[482] Al-Jāmiʿ in the beliefs and letters of Ahl al-Sunnah and al-Athar, p. 524
[483] Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah (2/55)

the people of Sunnah 'deviant' and 'deficient'... All of this is disobedience, and Ahl al-Sunnah have only one name, and it is impossible for them to be grouped under these titles."[484]

Ḥarb al-Kirmānī said in Al-Sunnah (6/14): "Whoever claims that īmān (īmān) is just a statement without actions is a Murji'ī. Whoever claims that īmān is a statement and actions are only rituals is a Murji'ī. If someone claims that īmān neither increases nor decreases, he is a Murji'ī. And if someone says that īmān increases or decreases, he has agreed with the Murji'ah. If someone does not consider the exception in īmān, he is a Murji'ī. If someone claims that his īmān is like the īmān of Jibrīl or the angels, he is a Murji'ī and worse than a Murji'ī; he is a liar and a Jahmī. If someone claims that people do not differ in īmān, he has lied. If someone claims that knowledge benefits the heart even if he does not speak it, he is a Murji'ī. And if someone claims that he is a believer with Allah and has completed his īmān, this is one of the most abhorrent statements of the Murji'ah."

He also said (29): "The Murji'ah are those who claim that īmān is just a statement without actions. They claim that īmān is a statement and actions are only rituals. They claim that īmān is only a concept and that people do not differ in īmān. They claim that their īmān is the same as that of the angels and the prophets. They claim that īmān neither increases nor decreases. They claim that īmān has no exception. They claim that whoever believes with his tongue but does not act is truly a believer. They claim that they are believers with Allah without exception. This is all the belief of the Murji'ah, and it is the worst and most misguided of beliefs, and the furthest from the truth."

Abū ʿAbd Allāh al-Zubayrī said: "A group with little understanding, weak reasoning, and feeble argument claimed that īmān is speech without action, that it neither increases nor decreases. They held that someone who believes, reforms, acts justly, does good, is honest, fulfills his promises, forgives wrongdoing, performs extra good actions, fulfills the rights of parents, children, relatives, neighbors, and friends — that such a person is on the same level as someone who only says "Lā ilāha illā Allāh" with his tongue, but neglects the obligations, falls short in performing religious duties, avoids good actions, betrays when entrusted, lies, breaks promises, oppresses, and is unjust. They claim both are equal in rank, and neither is superior to the other. This is a view that, when merely recounted, the intellect testifies to the ignorance of its adherents, and its description alone renders argument against it unnecessary. Any attempt to justify such a position only increases its weakness in the hearts of listeners, lest an ignorant person rely on it or imagine that its proponent is worth following. We found the Book and Sunnah opposing this claim. He also said, naming the sects that opposed the saved sect: The

[484] Al-Jāmiʿ in the beliefs and letters of Ahl al-Sunnah and al-Athar, p. 524 and 525)

Murji'ah — they are those who claim: Our īmān is like the īmān of Jibrīl, and that īmān is speech without action."[485]

Al-Ājurrī said: "Beware, may Allah have mercy on you, of those who say: a) My īmān is like the īmān of Jibrīl and Mīkā'īl. b) I am a believer in the sight of Allah. c) I am a believer with complete īmān All of this is the doctrine of the Murji'ah ."[486]

Abū ʿAbdullāh al-Marwazī said: "The Murji'ah all agree that the declaration with the tongue is part of īmān, except for a group from the Jahmiyyah who, according to us and the Murji'ah, are considered disbelievers. They claim that īmān is merely knowledge of Allah, after which they testify that the hearts of those they call disbelievers are knowledgeable, thus opposing the report from Allah and calling the one who denies with his tongue a believer with his heart. This is a direct contradiction of what has been reported from Allah, and the Murji'ah do not accept this deviation."[487]

Ibn Baṭṭah said: "Whoever claims to affirm the obligations but does not fulfill or act upon them, and who claims that major sins and immorality are forbidden but does not avoid them, and yet still claims to be a believer — has belied the Book and what the Messenger brought. His example is like the Munāfiq who said, "We believe with our mouths but our hearts do not believe" (al-Mā'idah: 41). Allah rejected their claim, called them Munāfiq, and declared their abode to be the lowest depth of Hell. Inaction, the Munāfiq are in a better state than the Murji'ah : The Munāfiq denied action, but still performed it. The Murji'ah affirm the necessity of action in words, but deny it through inaction. One who denies something in his heart, yet affirms it with his tongue and body, is in a better state than one who affirms it with his tongue but refuses to act on it. The Murji'ah are denying what they claim to affirm, and lying about what they pretend to believe — thus, they are worse than the Munāfiq. Woe to the one whose guide is not the Qur'an and Sunnah — how astray is his path, how dim his intellect, and how miserable his condition."[488]

Ibn Mandah said: "A mention of the differing views among people about what īmān is: A group of the Murji'ah said: īmān is an act of the heart without the tongue.
Another group said: īmān is an act of the tongue without the heart — they are the extremists among the Murji'ah . The majority of the Murji'ah said: īmān is both the action of the heart and the tongue together."[489]

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[485]Sharḥ al-īmān wal-Islām wa-Tasmiyat al-Firaq wal-Radd ʿalayhim (6)
[486]al-Sharīʿah (375)
[487]Taʿẓīm Qadr al-Ṣalāh (700)
[488] Al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (1155)
[489] al-īmān (1/331)

Al-Zanjānī said in his commentary on his Manẓūmah fī al-Sunnah (p. 106): "The Murji'ah are among the early sectarian innovations. They are various groups, with many subtle differences between them: Some of them say: "īmān is statement and conviction" — this is the view of al-Murīsī. Others say: "īmān is knowledge of Allah — that is, awareness of His existence" — this is the view of Jahm and al-Ashʿarī, and it is the most vile of their statements. Others say: "īmān is only verbal declaration, even if one believes the opposite in his heart" — this is the view of Ibn Karrām, which leads to the conclusion that the Munāfiq are believers.

Yet Allah explicitly declared their disbelief in many verses of the Qurʾān, and said they will be gathered with the disbelievers in the Fire. Despite their differences, they all agree on delaying (excluding) actions from īmān, and that actions are not part of it — thus they are called Murji'ah .

According to them — with all their differing views — whoever fulfills what they define as "īmān," even if he does not abide by any rules of the Sharīʿah, and does not refrain from any prohibitions, he is still — in their view — a true believer, a friend of Allah, deserving of Paradise and saved from Hellfire. His neglect of obligations and commission of sins does not harm him. This is a grave corruption in Islam, undermining the concept of reward and punishment, and contradicting the clear texts of the Qurʾān and Sunnah. May Allah grant success."

Yaḥyā ibn Abī al-Khayr al-ʿImrānī said: The Murji'ah said: "Allah is not to be described as punishing His servants for any sin other than disbelief."[490]

He also said: The Murji'ah claimed: "Since a moment of Tawḥīd erases all past disbelief, then Tawḥīd should also erase any concurrent sins."[491]

And he said: "The Murji'ah , the Karrāmiyyah, and the misguided among the Qadariyyah and others claimed: "īmān neither increases or decreases, and the īmān of the prophets is the same as the īmān of sinful people among creation."[492]

Ibn taymiyyah said: "The Murji'ah — both their theologians and jurists — say that actions may be called "īmān" metaphorically, because actions are fruits of īmān and its natural consequence, and because they serve as evidence of it."

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[490] al-Intiṣār (3/667)
[491] al-Intiṣār (3/681)
[492] al-Intiṣār (3/763)

He further explained: "The Murji'ah are of three types: First: Those who say īmān is only what is in the heart. Among these, some include the actions of the heart, and this is the majority among the Murji'ah . Second: Those who say īmān is only the declaration of the tongue. This view is not known from anyone before the Karrāmiyyah. Third: Those who say īmān is belief in the heart and verbal declaration — and this is the most well-known view among their jurists and worshippers."[493]

Ibn Taymiyyah said: "It necessarily follows from the view of the Murji'ah that a servant may be a complete believer — his īmān equal to that of the Prophets and the Siddiqūn — even if he does no righteous action at all: no prayer, no charity, no truthfulness, no ties of kinship, and even if he commits every major sin. According to them, such a man — who lies whenever he speaks, breaks his promises, betrays trusts, persists in lying and betrayal, never prostrates to Allah, never performs a single good action, never returns a trust, and commits every form of wrongdoing, falsehood, and indecency he can — is still considered a complete believer, with īmān equal to that of the Prophets. This follows from anyone who does not say that outward actions are necessary consequences of inward īmān.

He then said: They are also required to accept that someone who prostrates to the cross and idols willingly, throws the Qur'an into the toilet deliberately, murders without cause, kills everyone he sees praying, slaughters everyone he sees on pilgrimage, and does what the Qarmatians did to the Muslims — all while still being considered a believer and a friend of Allah, with īmān equal to that of the Prophets and the righteous. For either inward īmān contradicts these acts or it does not. If it does not, then these acts can exist alongside true īmān. If it does, then abstaining from such acts is a necessary result of that īmān. Thus, one who commits such actions cannot have true inner īmān.

Therefore, if outward actions and abstaining from sins are necessary consequences of inward īmān, then they are among its requirements. And it is known that they grow and diminish as īmān itself increases or decreases, because the effect only increases with the increase of its cause. Hence, outward actions are evidence of inward īmān, and their increase or decrease reflects the state of that īmān — and that is what we are seeking to affirm.

Whoever reflects on these matters with his intellect will come to realize that the path of the Salaf is the true path from which there is no turning. Whoever deviates from it falls into known corruption — evident through both sound reason and authentic revelation — like all those who contradict the way of the Salaf and the Imāms. Allah knows best."[494]

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[493] Majmū al-Fatāwā (19/57)
[494] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/583)

He also said in: The Murji'ah , in all their sects, say that major sins and abandoning outward obligations do not reduce īmān at all. They argue that if any of it was lost, all of it would be lost — so īmān must be one indivisible whole, equal in both the righteous and the wicked. But the statements of the Prophet and his companions prove that some of it can be lost while some remains — such as his saying: "Those who have even a mustard seed of īmān in their hearts will be brought out of the Fire."[495]

[495] Al-īmān by Ibn Taymiyyah(p. 176)

Clarification that all sects of the Murji'ah are not from Ahl As-Sunnah and they are amongst the Deviated, doomed sects

It is an ijmāʿ that the Murji'ah are not from Ahl As-Sunnah.

Ibn Taymiyyah said: "The innovation of irjā' is one that the Salaf and the a'immah spoke against extensively, and they made very harsh statements regarding its followers."[496]

He also said: "The Salaf strongly opposed the Murji'ah for excluding actions from īmān , and for saying that all people's īmān is equal."[497]

He further said, referring to the Murji'at al-Fuqahā': "None of the a'immah declared them disbelievers, but they did label them innovators."[498]

Ibn Rajab stated: "The Salaf fiercely rejected anyone who excluded actions from īmān , and among those who did so and declared such a view an innovation were: Saʿīd ibn Jubayr, Maymūn ibn Mihrān, Qatādah, Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī, Ibrāhīm al-Nakhaʿī, al-Zuhrī, Yaḥyā ibn Abī Kathīr, and others. Al-Thawrī said, 'It is a newly invented opinion. We found the people upon something different."[499]

One of the greatest calamities of our time is that some contemporaries consider Murji'at al-Fuqahā' to be amongst Ahl As-Sunnah and the disagreement between Ahl As-Sunnah and Murji'at al-Fuqahā' are only superficial and mere verbal, this contradicts the statement of the Salaf regarding them and the consensus.

The Murji'ah the early Salaf condemned were the Murji'at al-Fuqahā' – those who exclude actions from īmān and īmān is valid with speech and belief only. The Murji'ah from the Jahmiyyah did not emerge till later. Below is a list of statements from Salaf and scholars of Ahl As-Sunnah

Saʿīd ibn Jubayr (d. 95 AH):

He said: "The Murji'ah are the Jews of the Qiblah."[500]

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[496] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/621)
[497] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/555)
[498] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (10/748)
[499] Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm wa'l-Ḥikam (1/145)
[500] al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh (701)

He also said: "The Murji'ah are like the Ṣābi'ah."[501]

ʿAṭāʾ ibn al-Sāʾib said: Saʿīd ibn Jubayr mentioned the Murji'ah and struck a parable for them: "They are like the Ṣābi'ah. They went to the Jews and asked: 'What is your religion?' They replied: 'Judaism.' 'What is your book?' 'The Torah.' 'Who is your prophet?' 'Mūsā.' 'And what is the fate of those who follow you?' 'Paradise.' Then they went to the Christians and asked: 'What is your religion?' They replied: 'Christianity.' 'What is your book?' 'The Gospel.' 'Who is your prophet?' "Īsā.' 'And what is the fate of those who follow you?' 'Paradise.' Then they said: 'So we follow that.'"[502]

Ibrāhīm al-Nakhaʿī (d. 96 AH):

ʿAṭāʾ ibn al-Sāʾib said: "I never saw Ibrāhīm as harsh upon any of the people of desires as he was upon the Murji'ah ."[503]

Al-Mughīrah narrated from Ibrāhīm: When irjāʾ was mentioned before him, he said: "It is a newly invented opinion."[504]

Abū Ḥamzah al-Thumālī al-Aʿwar said: I asked Ibrāhīm: "What do you say about the opinion of the Murji'ah ?" He replied: "Oh! They've patched together a statement. I fear for the Ummah because of them. Much evil lies in their affair. Beware of them."[505]

ʿAṭāʾ ibn Abī Rabāḥ (d. 114 AH):

Ibn Mujāhid said: I was with ʿAṭāʾ ibn Abī Rabāḥ when his son Yaʿqūb came and said: "O my father, some of our companions claim that their īmān is like the īmānof Jibrīl."
He replied: "O my son, these are not my companions. The īmānof one who obeys Allāh is not like the īmānof one who disobeys Him."[506]

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[501] al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh (686)
[502] al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh (642)
[503] al-Sunnah by Ibn Shāhīn (7)
[504] al-Sunnah by Ibn Shāhīn (5)
[505] al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (1330)
[506] Al-Sunnah by ʿAbdullāh ibn Aḥmad (709), and Sharḥ Uṣūl al-Iʿtiqād by al-Lālakāʾī (1569)

Maymūn ibn Mihrān (d. 117 AH):

Abū Milīḥ said: Maymūn was asked about the speech of the Murji'ah , and he said: "I am above that." Maʿqil said: I then sat with Maymūn ibn Mihrān and someone said to him: "O Abū Ayyūb, why don't you recite and explain a sūrah for us?" He then recited — or it was recited — "When the sun is wrapped up..." until he reached "Obeyed and trustworthy" [al-Takwīr: 21]. He said: "That is Jibrīl, peace be upon him. Ruin is for those who say their īmān is like the īmānof Jibrīl."[507]

Qatādah (d. 118 AH) and Yaḥyā ibn Abī Kathīr (d. 132 AH):

al-Awzāʿī said: Both Yaḥyā ibn Abī Kathīr and Qatādah used to say: "There is no innovation we fear more upon this ummah than irjāʾ ."[508]

Muḥammad ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī (d. 124 AH):

Al-Zuhrī said: "No innovation introduced into Islam has been more harmful to its adherents than irjāʾ ."[509]

Abū Isḥāq al-Sabīʿī (d. 129 AH):

Sufyān narrated from Abū Isḥāq: "I am older than irjāʾ ."[510]

Meaning: This belief of irjāʾ appeared after his time, indicating that it was an innovation.

Similar is the statement of Saʿīd ibn Jubayr (d. 95 AH) to a Murjiʾī: "Are you not ashamed of a view that you are older than?" Likewise, Abū Ḥāzim Salamah ibn Dīnār (d. 144 AH) said about the Qadariyyah: "May Allah curse a religion that I am older than."

Manṣūr ibn al-Muʿtamir (d. 132 AH):

Manṣūr said: "I do not say as the misguided, innovating Murji'ah say."[511]

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[507] Al-Sunnah by ʿAbdullāh (806)
[508] Al-īmān by Aḥmad (65)
[509] Kitāb al-īmān by Abū ʿUbayd (77)
[510] Suʾālāt Abī ʿUbayd al-Ājurrī to Abū Dāwūd (250)
[511] Kitāb al-īmānby Aḥmad (542)

He also said: “They are the enemies of Allah: the Murji’ah and the Rāfiḍah.”[512]

Sulaymān ibn Mihrān al-Aʿmash (d. 147 AH):

Abū Bakr ibn ʿAyyāsh said: Al-Aʿmash swore: “By Allah, besides whom there is no deity, I do not know anyone worse than them.”He was asked: “You mean the Murji’ah ?”He replied: “The Murji’ah , and others as well.”[513]

ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAwn (d. 151 AH):

Al-Naḍr ibn Shumayl said: Ibn ʿAwn would never frown at anyone, but when a Qadarī or Murji’ī debated with him, he would turn his face away or deliberately avert his gaze.[514]

Abū ʿAmr al-Awzāʿī (d. 157 AH):

Aḥmad ibn Abī al-Ḥawārī said: Wakīʿ ibn al-Jarrāḥ narrated that Sufyān used to say: “īmān is statement and action; it increases and decreases.” Aḥmad said: I asked al-Firyābī about it. I said: “Did you hear this from Sufyān?” He replied: “I did not hear it directly from him, but it was his view.” I also asked al-Firyābī about the statement of al-Awzāʿī. He said: 'I heard him say: ‘īmān is statement and action; it increases and decreases.’ Then Fudayk was mentioned as someone who reported from him, so we went to Fudayk ibn Sulaymān and said: ‘Narrate to us.’ He said: ‘A man came to us from Damascus claiming that there was a man in Damascus who says that īmān is a statement and action—it increases but does not decrease. So we left Qaysāriyya, a group of about twenty of us, walking on foot until we reached al-Awzāʿī in Beirut. We said to him: “O Abū ʿAmr, there is a man in Damascus who claims that īmān is statement and action and it increases but does not decrease.”’ Abū ʿAmr responded: ‘Whoever claims that īmān is statement and action, and increases but does not decrease—beware of him, for he is an innovator.’ Al-Awzāʿī said: ‘īmān is statement and action; it increases and decreases.’”[515]

Abū Isḥāq said: Al-Awzāʿī was asked about someone being questioned: “Are you truly a believer?” He replied: “Asking about that is an innovation, and bearing witness upon it is an overreach not mandated in our religion, nor legislated by our Prophet. Whoever asks such a question has no Imām before him—only someone like himself in dispute. This statement is argumentation and disputation, a novelty. Inaction, your testimony for yourself is not what affirms the truth if it is not the case, nor does your denial remove you from īmānif you truly are

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[512] Al-Lālikāʾī (1646)
[513] Sunan of ʿAbd Allāh ibn Aḥmad (244)
[514] Al-Qadr by al-Firyābī (331)
[515] Tārīkh Dimashq (48/243)

a believer. The one who asks you about your īmān is not asking because of you, but seeks to challenge Allah's knowledge, claiming that his knowledge and Allah's knowledge in the matter are equal. Be patient upon the Sunnah, stand where the people stood, say what they said, refrain from what they refrained from, and follow the path of your righteous predecessors. What sufficed them will suffice you. The people of al-Shām were unaware of this innovation until some from Iraq, who had fallen into it, brought it to them."[516]

Sufyān ibn Saʿīd al-Thawrī (d. 161 AH):

ʿAbd Allāh ibn Aḥmad said: It was written to Ibn Khallād who said: I heard Yaḥyā say: "Sufyān was severe in his speech against the Murji'ah and refuting them."[517]

Sufyān said—mentioning the Murji'ah : "It is a newly invented opinion; we found the people upon something else."[518]

Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf said: I entered upon Sufyān al-Thawrī, and in his lap was the muṣḥaf; he was flipping through its pages and said: "No one is more distant from it than the Murji'ah ."[519]

Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mughīrah said: I asked Sufyān al-Thawrī: "Can I pray behind someone who says: īmān is statement without action?" He replied: "No, and with no honor (i.e., certainly not)."[520]

Sufyān said: "The religion of irjā' is an innovated religion."[521]

Mālik ibn Anas, Imām of Dār al-Hijrah (d. 179 AH):

Ibn Wahb said: I heard Mālik say: "The Murji'ah are in error, and they have said a grave statement." He said: "Even if he burns the Kaʿbah or does any evil, he is still a Muslim."
It was said to Mālik: "What is your view of them?" He said: "Allah said: 'But if they repent, establish prayer, and give zakāh, then they are your brothers in religion' (al-Tawbah 11)."[522]

Zuhayr ibn ʿAbbād said: I said to Mālik: "What is your view regarding two groups among us in al-Shām who have differed over īmān— one says that it increases and decreases?" He replied: "What an awful thing they've said." I said, "They also say: We fear hypocrisy for ourselves." He

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[516] Al-Lālikā'ī (1626)
[517] al-ʿIlal (5052)
[518] Kitāb al-īmān by Aḥmad (27)
[519] Al-Lālikā'ī (1658)
[520] Al-Lālikā'ī (1654), Ḥilyat al-Awliyā' (7/27)
[521] Al-Sunnah by al-Khallāl (952)
[522] Tartīb al-Madārik (2/48)

said: “What an awful thing they’ve said.” I said: “One group says: We are believers, if Allah wills; while the other says: īmān is one single entity, and the īmān of the people of the earth is like the īmān of those in the heavens.”

He said: “Do not say that.” I said: “What if they say: We are true believers?” He said: “Do not say that.” I said: “Then what should the two groups say?” He replied: “They should say: We are believers — and then stop there, avoiding all further speech. For the Prophet ﷺ said: ‘I have been commanded to fight the people until they say: Lā ilāha illa Allāh…’ and He said: ‘And do not say to one who offers you peace: You are not a believer’ (Qurʾān 4:94).”

Zuhayr said: So I said to him, “But the two groups have come to oppose each other.” He expressed grief and astonishment and said to me: “People used to pray toward Bayt al-Maqdis for sixteen months, then they were commanded to pray toward the Sacred House, and Allah said: ‘And Allah would never cause your īmānto be lost’ (Qurʾān 2:143) — meaning your prayer toward Bayt al-Maqdis. And this verse reminds me of the claim of the Murji’ah that prayer is not part of īmān .”

Zuhayr said: A man once entered upon Mālik and asked him about something similar, so he ordered that he be expelled.”[523]

From Maʿn ibn ʿĪsā: A man in Madīnah known as Abū al-Juwayriyah held the view of irjā’ . Mālik ibn Anas said: “Do not marry into his family.”[524]

Al-Khalīlī said:” Ibrāhīm ibn Yūsuf al-Balkhī, one of the Murji’ah ’s leaders and elders, had an incident where he entered upon Mālik ibn Anas. Qutaybah ibn Saʿīd al-Balkhī stood up and said: “This man holds the opinion of the Iraqis in irjā’ .” Mālik then ordered him to be expelled and taken by the hand.”[525]

ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-Mubārak (d. 181 AH):

Ḥafṣ ibn Ḥumayd said: I asked ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-Mubārak, “Into how many sects did this ummah split?” He replied: “The foundation is four sects: the Shīʿah, the Ḥarūriyyah, the Qadariyyah, and the Murji’ah . The Shīʿah split into 22 sects, the Ḥarūriyyah into 21 sects, the Qadariyyah into 16 sects, and the Murji’ah into 13 sects.” Al-Ibānah al-Kubrā by Ibn Baṭṭah (294)

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[523] Tartīb al-Madārik 2/42-43
[524] Al-Lālikāʾī (1656)
[525] al-Irshād (1/277)

ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Shaqīq said: A man said to ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-Mubārak, "O group of Murji'ah !" He replied: "You have accused me of one of the deviant desires (ahwā')."[526]

Look at the anger of Ibn al-Mubārak when he was accused of the bidʿah of irjā' .

Shurayk ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Qāḍī (d. 177 AH):

Shurayk said—mentioning the Murji'ah : "They are the most vile of people. The Rāfiḍah are vile enough, but the Murji'ah lie against Allah."[527]

Shurayk also said: "The Murji'ah are enemies of Allah, and the Rāfiḍah are vile enough."[528]

ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Mahdī said: It reached me that Shuʿbah said to Shurayk: "Why do you not accept the testimony of the Murji'ah ?" He replied: "How can I accept the testimony of people who claim that prayer is not part of īmān ?"[529]

Abū Nuʿaym said: "Shurayk would not accept the testimony of the Rāfiḍah or the Murji'ah ."[530]

Al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ (d. 187 AH):

Al-Fuḍayl said: "The people of innovation have separated actions from īmān . They say: 'The obligations of Allah are not part of īmān .' And whoever says that has made a grave fabrication. The people of the Sunnah say: 'Inaction, Allah has linked action with īmān .'"[531]

ʿUmar ibn Hārūn (d. 194 AH):

Abū Rajā' said: "Umar ibn Hārūn was severe against the Murji'ah . He used to mention their evils and calamities, and because of that there was enmity between him and them."[532]

Abū Bakr ibn ʿAyyāsh (d. 194 AH):

Muʿāwiyah ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-ʿUthmānī said: A Murji'ī, a Rāfiḍī, and a Ḥarūrī were on a boat with Abū Bakr ibn ʿAyyāsh. They began disputing among themselves and came to Abū Bakr

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[526] Al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh (679)
[527] Al-īmān by Aḥmad (543)
[528] Tārīkh Ibn Maʿīn (narration of al-Dūrī (4991))
[529] Al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh (670)
[530] Akhbār al-Quḍāt (3/162)
[531] Al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh (793)
[532] Tārīkh Baghdād (13/15), al-Siyar (9/270)

saying: “Judge between us.” He said: “You know my opposition to all of you.” They said: “Even so, judge between us.” He said to the Rāfiḍī: “Is there anyone more ignorant than you? You claim that this affair belonged to your leader, and that he gave it up during his lifetime and handed it over to someone else, and yet you seek to reclaim it after his death.”

Then he said to the Ḥarūrī: “You refrain from killing women and children, but you permit the blood of Muslims to be spilled.” Then he said to the Murji’ī: “You are the most foolish of the three—these two believe you are in Hell, and yet you testify that they are in Paradise.”[533]

Yūsuf ibn Asbāṭ (d. 195 AH):

Al-Musayyib ibn Wāḍiḥ said: I came to Yūsuf ibn Asbāṭ and said to him, “O Abū Muḥammad, you are among the last remaining from the earlier scholars. You are a proof against those you meet, and you are an Imām of the Sunnah. I did not come to hear ḥadīths from you, but rather to ask about their explanation. The ḥadīth has come to us: ‘The Children of Israel split into seventy-one sects, and this Ummah will split into seventy-two sects.’ What are these sects so that we may avoid them?” He said: “Their roots are four: al-Qadariyyah, al-Murji’ah , ash-Shīʿah, and al-Khawārij ...”[534]

<u>He counted the Murji’ah among the foundational sects of the misguided and doomed innovators.</u>

Wakīʿ ibn al-Jarrāḥ (d. 196 AH):

Muḥammad ibn Muqātil said: I asked Wakīʿ, “Among us are people who say that īmāndoes not increase.” He said: “These are the wicked Murji’ah . The people of īmān say: words are not sufficient without actions and conviction.”[535]

Wakīʿ also said: “Beware of these Murji’ah , and of the Jahmiyyah. The Jahmiyyah are disbelievers. Al-Murīsī is a Jahmī. Do you know how they disbelieved? They said: ‘Maʿrifah (mere recognition) is sufficient,’ and this is disbelief. The Murji’ah say: īmān is statement without action — and this is an innovation.”[536]

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[533] Tārīkh Baghdād (15/542)
[534] al-Ḥujjah fī Bayān al-Maḥajjah (528)
[535] Dhamm al-Kalām (472)
[536] Khalaq Afʿāl al-ʿIbād by al-Bukhārī (48)

Sufyān ibn ʿUyaynah (d. 198 AH):

Sufyān ibn ʿUyaynah said: “Do not pray behind a Rāfiḍī, nor a Jahmī, nor a Qadarī, nor a Murjiʾ.”[537]

Ibrāhīm ibn Mūsā al-Farrāʾ al-Rāzī said: Ibn ʿUyaynah was asked about irjāʾ . He said: “irjāʾ is of two kinds:

1. A group that deferred the matter of ʿAlī and ʿUthmān — and they have passed.
2. The Murjiʾah of today: a people who say īmān is statement without action — do not sit with them, do not eat with them.”[538]

Yahya ibn Salām al-Baṣrī al-Ṯaymī (200 AH):

Abū al-ʿArab said: Bakr ibn Ḥamad narrated to me, saying: Abū Rabīʿ al-Luḥayānī told me that a man said to him: “O Abā Zikriyā, they say that you advocate al-irjāʾ ’.” He struck his hand on the wall of the qiblah and said: “By the One who commands the qiblah, I have never worshiped Allah based on irjāʾ ’ in my life. How could that be, when I told you it is a bidʿah?”[539]

ʿĪsā ibn Miskīn narrated: ʿAwn ibn Yūsuf said: “I said to Yahya ibn Salām: ʿPeople accuse you of al-irjāʾ ’.’ Yahya then took his beard in his hand and said: ʿMay Allah burn this beard with fire if I have ever worshiped Allah based on irjāʾ ’.’” It was then said to ʿĪsā: “What do you say about him?” He replied: “By Allah, he is better than us, and Allah has cleared him of what they say.” And in another place: “How, when I have already told you that it is an bidʿah.”[540]

Muḥammad ibn Idrīs al-Shāfiʿī (204 AH):

From al-Buwaitī: I asked al-Shāfiʿī: “Should I pray behind a Rāfiḍī?” He replied: “Do not pray behind a Rāfiḍī, nor a Qadarī, nor a Murjiʾī.” I asked: “Describe them to us?” He replied: “Whoever says that īmān is a statement, he is a Murjiʾī.” “Whoever says that Abū Bakr and ʿUmar are not Imāms, he is a Rāfiḍī.” “Whoever attributes will (choice) to himself, he is a Qadarī.”[541]

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[537] al-Lālakāʾī (1268)
[538] Tahdhīb al-Āthār, Musnad Ibn ʿAbbās (976)
[539] Ṭabaqāt ʿUlamāʾ Ifrīqīyah (p. 37)
[540] Riyāḍ al-Nufūs (1/190)
[541] Dhamm al-Kalām (1166)

From Abū Thawr: I said to al-Shāfiʿī: "Write a book on irjāʾ '." He said: "Leave this. It seems he disapproved of such speech."[542]

Yazīd ibn Harūn (206 AH):

Yazīd ibn Harūn said regarding his position: "Whoever calls to al-irjāʾ ', then prayer behind him must be repeated."[543]

Isḥāq ibn Bahlūl said: I asked Yazīd ibn Harūn: "Should I pray behind the Jahmiyyah?" He replied: "No." I asked: "Should I pray behind the Murji'ah?" He said: "They are wicked."[544]

Muʿammal ibn Ismāʿīl (206 AH):

Abū Aḥmad Mahmūd ibn Ghailān said: I heard Muʿammal ibn Ismāʿīl saying in a gathering: "I disassociate myself from every innovator, whether a Jahmī, Rāfiḍī, Qadarī, or Murji'ī. If they heard from me, by God, had I known you, I would not have narrated to you."[545]

Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Firyābī (212 AH):

Imām al-Bukhārī said: I saw some people enter upon Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Firyābī, and it was said to him: "O Abū ʿAbd Allāh, these are Murji'ah." He replied: "Expel them." They repented and returned. Tahdhīb al-Kamāl (58/27)

Muṭarrif ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Madānī (220 AH):

Al-Tirmidhī said: "I heard Abū Muṣʿab al-Madānī say: 'Whoever says that īmān is only a statement should be made to repent. If he repents, well and good, otherwise his neck should be struck.'" Sunan al-Tirmidhī (2622)

Abū ʿUmar al-Ḍarrīr Ḥafṣ ibn ʿUmar (220 AH):

ʿAbd al-Wahhāb ibn Yazīd al-Kindī said: "I saw Abū ʿUmar al-Ḍarrīr in a dream, and I asked him: 'What did Allāh do with you?' He replied: 'He forgave me and showed me mercy.'" I asked: "Which actions did you find best?" He said: "What you are upon, of the Sunnah and knowledge." I asked: "And which actions did you find worst?" He said: "Beware of the names."

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[542] Al-Sīyar (10/30)
[543] Al-Lālākā'ī (1657)
[544] Al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh (57)
[545] Al-Lālākā'ī (1061)

I asked: "What are the names?" He said: "Qadarī, Muʿtazilī, Murji'ī," and he kept listing the people of innovation."[546]

Abū ʿUbayd al-Qāsim ibn Salām (224 AH):

Abū ʿUbayd al-Qāsim ibn Salām said: "I do not mind praying behind the Jahmī, the Rāfiḍī, or the Jew and Christian." "And I do not pray behind anyone who does not place Abū Bakr above all people after the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. As for prayer behind the Qadarī, the Khārijī, and the Murji'ī, I do not like it, and I do not see it acceptable."[547]

Abū ʿUbayd al-Qāsim ibn Salām said in his book al-īmān : "The scholars criticized those who make īmān only a statement without action, and they forbade sitting with them." He then narrated some reports about abandoning the people of innovation, and then he said: "Upon this view were Sufyān, al-Awzāʿī, Mālik ibn Anas, and those after them from the people of knowledge and the people of the Sunnah, who were the lights of the earth, the Imāms of knowledge in their time, from the people of Iraq, al-Ḥijāz, al-Shām, and others. They used to criticize and reject all people of innovation, and they viewed īmān as both a statement and action."

Amīr ʿAbd Allāh ibn Ṭāhir (230 AH):

Aḥmad al-Ribātī said: "'Abd Allāh ibn Ṭāhir said to me: 'O Aḥmad, you dislike these people out of ignorance, but I dislike them out of knowledge.'" First: "They do not see obedience to the ruler." Second: "To them, īmān has no value. By Allāh, I would not dare to say: 'My īmān is like the īmān of Yāḥyā ibn Yāḥyā, or like the īmān of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal,' while they say: 'Our īmān is like the īmān of Jibrīl and Mīkā'īl.'"[548]

Isḥāq ibn Rāhwayh (238 AH):

Ḥarb ibn Ismāʿīl said: I said to Isḥāq ibn Rāhwayh, "A man possesses a book that contains the opinion of irjā' , or qadar, or bidʿah, and I borrowed it from him. When it came into my possession, I burned it or tore it up." He said: "There is nothing upon you."[549]

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[546] Al-Manāmāt by Ibn Abī Dunyā (217)
[547] Al-Sunnah by Ḥarb (287)
[548] ʿAqīdat Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth (109)
[549] al-Sunnah by Ḥarb (602)

Ḥarb said: I heard Isḥāq being asked by a man, “A man says: ‘I am truly a believer (mu’min ḥaqqan)’?” He replied: “He is truly a disbeliever (kāfir ḥaqqan).”[550]

Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (241 AH):

Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal said in a letter: “As for what you mentioned of those who say: ‘īmān is only statement,’ this is the view of the Murji’ah , an innovated view which was not held by our predecessors or those whom we emulate.” He said: “Beware that the Murji’ah do not mislead you in your religion…”[551]

Abū Bakr al-Marwudhī said: I heard Abū ʿAbd Allāh (Aḥmad) say: “The Murji’ī who argues should not be prayed behind.”[552]

Aḥmad also said: “Do not pray behind one who claims that īmān is only a statement, if he is a propagator of that view.”[553]

Aḥmad said: “I do not like for a man to mix with the Murji’ah .”[554]

He also said: “Draw near to Allah by hating the people of irjā’ , for this is one of the strongest actions by which we seek closeness to Him.”[555]

al-Kawsaj said: I said to Aḥmad, “Should the Murji’ī who calls to his view be shunned?” He said: “Yes, by Allah, he should be shunned and distanced.”[556]

Abū al-Ḥārith said: Abū ʿAbd Allāh said: “Do not pray behind the Murji’ah ,”[557]
Meaning the funeral prayer.

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[550] al-Sunnah by Ḥarb (172)
[551] al-Sunnah by al-Khallāl (1101)
[552] al-Sunnah by al-Khallāl (1149)
[553] al-Sunnah by Ḥarb (187)
[554] al-Sunnah by Ḥarb (205)
[555] Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah (2/226)
[556] Masā’il allatī Ḥalafa ʿalayhā Aḥmad (41)
[557] al-Sunnah by al-Khallāl (1151)

Muḥammad ibn Ismāʿīl al-Bukhārī (256 AH):

Muḥammad ibn Ismāʿīl said: "I wrote from one thousand scholars and more, and I did not write from anyone except those who said: 'īmān is statement and action.' I did not write from those who said: 'īmān is statement only.'"[558]

Abū Zurʿah (264 AH) and Abū Ḥātim (277 AH):

Abū Ḥātim and Abū Zurʿah said in their ʿAqīdah in which they conveyed the consensus (ijmāʿ) of the scholars: "We met the scholars of all regions — the Ḥijāz, ʿIrāq, Egypt, al-Shām, and Yemen — and from their creed was: 'The Murji'ah are innovators (mubtadiʿah) and misguided (ḍuʿāl).'" They also said: "Whoever says, 'I am a true believer (mu'min ḥaqqan),' is an innovator. And whoever says, 'I am a believer in the sight of Allah,' is among the liars." Abū Ḥātim also said: "The sign of the people of innovation is their attack on the people of ḥadīth...
And the sign of the Murji'ah is that they label the Ahl al-Sunnah as Mukhālifah (opposers) and Naqṣāniyyah (deficient ones)."[559]

Yaʿqūb ibn Sufyān (277 AH):

Abū Yūsuf Yaʿqūb ibn Sufyān said: "īmānaccording to Ahl al-Sunnah is sincerity to Allah through the heart, the tongue, and the limbs — it is statement and action, and it increases and decreases. Upon this we found all those we met in our time: in Makkah, Madīnah, al-Shām, Basrah, Kūfah..." He then named many of them and said: "All of them say: 'īmān is statement and action,' and they criticize the Murji'ah and reject their view."[560]

Ḥarb al-Kirmānī (280 AH):

Ḥarb al-Kirmānī said in his "As-Sunnah", in which he transmitted the consensus of the scholars he met (92 of them): "The Murji'ah are those who claim that īmān is statement without action, and that īmān is mere speech while actions are merely laws... This is all the view of the Murji'ah , and it is the most vile, the most misguided, and the farthest from guidance."

ʿUthmān ibn Saʿīd al-Dārimī (280 AH):

Abū Saʿīd al-Dārimī said in his refutation of al-Marīsī: "This objector opened his book with his own words and followed it with praise for al-Marīsī, misleading people into thinking — and

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[558] Sharḥ Uṣūl Iʿtiqād Ahl al-Sunnah by al-Lālakāʾī (1452)
[559] al-Jāmiʿ fī ʿAqāʾid wa Rasāʾil Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Athar (p. 524)
[560] al-Lālakāʾī (1589)

leading the ignorant and the naïve around him to think — that the doctrines of Jahm and al-Marīsī in tawḥīd are like some of the disagreements among people regarding īmān being statement and action, increase and decrease, or like their disagreement in tashayyuʿ, qadar, and the like. So that they would not be more repulsed by Jahm's and al-Marīsī's doctrines than they are by the speech of the Shīʿah, Murji'ah , and Qadariyyah.

But the objector has strayed far from the path and made many errors in interpretation — because these other sects were not declared disbelievers by the scholars due to their differences, whereas no one doubted the disbelief of al-Marīsī, Jahm, and their followers."

Abū Muḥammad ibn al-Marzubān (337 AH):

He said: "The Murji'ah are a sect from among the Muslims who hold an innovated belief (maqālah mubtadiʿah) — their statement that īmān is speech without action. They delayed action, meaning: they deferred it."[561]

Ibn Ḥibbān al-Bustī (354 AH):

He said, in the biography of one of the Imāms of the Murji'ah : "For another reason, he is not to be used as evidence, because he was a caller to irjāʾ , and a caller to innovation (bidʿah) is not to be used as evidence according to our Imāms — all of them, and I do not know of any disagreement among them on this."[562]

So he described the one upon irjāʾ as being upon innovation, and conveyed the consensus of the Imāms on this.

Ḥāmid ibn Muḥammad al-Raffāʾ (356 AH):

Yaḥyā ibn ʿAmmār said: "Ḥāmid ibn Muḥammad al-Raffāʾ would forbid the people of opinion (raʾy) from narrating from him, and would not allow them in his house to hear from him.
A man from the leaders of Balkh came to him and insisted, so he permitted him. When he entered, he did not even lift his head to him and said: 'Where are you from?'
He replied, 'From Balkh.' He said: 'The home of the Murji'ah !' Then he said to me: 'Take al-Radd of al-Ḥumaydī [i.e., against Abū Ḥanīfah],' and I read much of it to him."[563]

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[561] Taṣḥīḥ al-Faṣīḥ wa Sharḥuh (p. 184)
[562] al-Majrūḥīn (3/63)
[563] Dhamm al-Kalām (4/401–402, no. 1290)

ʿUmar ibn Aḥmad Ibn Shāhīn (d. 385 AH):

He said in his ʿAqīdah al-Sunnah (40): "I disassociate from every innovation: Qadar, irjāʾ , Rafd, Naṣb, Iʿtizāl... and every madhhab that the scholars of the Sunnah have affirmed — even if it hasn't reached me — that is my madhhab."[564]

Ibn Baṭṭah (d. 387 AH):

He said: "Among the Sunnah, the completeness and perfection of īmān , is disassociating from every name that opposes the Sunnah and exits the consensus of the ummah — avoiding its people, and distancing oneself from whoever holds to it, and seeking nearness to Allah by opposing it. Such as: the Rāfiḍah, the Shīʿah, the Jahmiyyah, and the Murji'ah ."[565]

He said: "We seek refuge in Allah from the misguided doctrines of the Murji'ah ."[566]

He said: "Contrary to the saying of the deviant Murji'ah whose hearts have deviated and whose minds have been played with by devils."[567]

Abū ʿUmar Yūsuf ibn ʿAbd al-Barr (463 AH):

Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr said while discussing the criticism of the righteous predecessors against some Imāms of the Murji'ah : He also used to say: "Acts of obedience, like prayer and others, are not called 'īmān.' And everyone from Ahl al-Sunnah who says that īmān is 'statement and action' rejects his view and declares him an innovator for it."[568]

He reported the consensus of Ahl al-Sunnah on declaring anyone who excludes actions from the definition of īmānto be an innovator—which is the doctrine of the Murji'ah .

Abū al-Muẓaffar Manṣūr ibn Muḥammad al-Samʿānī (489 AH):

Al-Samʿānī said: "Know that whenever you examine the lives of the Companions and those after them from the righteous predecessors, you will find that they strongly forbade debating with the people of innovation. They did not consider refuting their words with rational arguments to be appropriate. Rather, whenever they heard of someone from the people of innovation, they

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[564] Refer to al-Jāmiʿ fī ʿAqāʾid wa Rasāʾil Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Athar (p. 899)
[565] al-Sharḥ wa al-Ibānah (542)
[566] al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (1136)
[567] al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (1150)
[568] al-Intiqāʾ (p. 149)

would openly disassociate from him, forbid others from sitting with him, speaking to him, or even looking at him. They said: "If you see an innovator on the road, take another path." Inaction, the four major sects of misguidance—namely: Qadar, irjāʾ , the Khārijite view, and Rāfiḍīsm—appeared toward the end of the Companions' time. Whenever their matter reached them, they commanded what we just mentioned. We do not have any report of a Companion debating them with rational arguments or recommending doing so."[569]

Abū al-Wafā ʿAlī ibn ʿAqīl (513 AH):

Ibn ʿAqīl said: "It seems the founder of irjāʾ was a zindīq (heretic). The well-being of the world relies on affirming divine warning and believing in reward and punishment. Since the Murji'ah could not deny the existence of the Creator—due to people's aversion and reason's rejection of such—they instead nullified the benefit of affirming Him, which is: fear and watchfulness. Thus, they destroyed the regulatory system of the Sharīʿah. They are the worst sect in Islam."[570]

Muḥammad ibn al-Qāḍī Abī Yaʿlā al-Farrāʾ (526 AH):

Ibn Abī Yaʿlā al-Ḥanbalī said: "It is obligatory to boycott the people of innovation and misguidance, such as the Mushabbihah, Mujassimah, Ashʿarīs, Muʿtazilah, Rāfiḍah, Murji'ah , Qadariyyah, Jahmiyyah, Khawārij , Sālimiyyah, Karrāmiyyah, and the rest of the condemned sects."[571]

Ibn al-Ḥanbalī ʿAbd al-Wahhāb ibn ʿAbd al-Wāḥid (536 AH):

Ibn al-Ḥanbalī said, while discussing the verse: "Inaction, I am Most Forgiving to whoever repents, believes, does righteous actions, then follows guidance" [Ṭā Hā: 82]:

Its interpretation is: Repentance from shirk, affirming that there is no deity but Allah and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah; "believes" means belief in the heart, "does righteous actions" means prayer, fasting, ḥajj, jihād, and the like, and "then follows guidance" means to follow the Sunnah of the Messenger in all that he commanded.

All of this is a refutation of the Murji'ah and the Muʿtazilah—may Allah curse them—because they say: īmān is only a statement without actions."[572]

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[569] Al-Intiṣār li-Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth (p. 53)
[570] Talbīs Iblīs (p. 76)
[571] al-Iʿtiqād (p. 43)
[572] al-Risālah al-Wāḍiḥah (2/792)

Ibn Taymiyyah (728 AH):

Ibn Taymiyyah said, discussing those who excluded actions from the definition of īmān: "The Murji'ah have deviated in this fundamental matter from the clarity of the Qur'ān, Sunnah, and the statements of the Companions and the Followers who followed them in goodness. They relied on their own opinions and interpretations based on language, which is the approach of the people of innovation. Imām Aḥmad used to say: "Most of people's errors come from interpretation and analogy."

Thus, you find the Muʿtazilah, the Murji'ah, the Rāfiḍah, and others among the innovators interpreting the Qur'ān according to their own opinions and rational arguments and linguistic interpretations. For this reason, they do not rely on the hadiths of the Prophet ﷺ, nor on the Companions, nor on the Followers, nor on the Imāms of the Muslims."[573]

He also said: The Salaf were very severe in their condemnation of the Murji'ah for removing actions from īmān . They said: īmān is the same among all people. Without a doubt, saying that all people are equal in īmān is a grave error. People do not have equal levels of belief, love, fear, or knowledge—they differ in many ways. Also, their excluding actions suggests they also excluded actions of the heart, which is clearly false. For if someone believes the Prophet but hates him and opposes him with his heart and body, then he is certainly a disbeliever—by necessity. If they say that actions of the heart are included in īmān , they are still mistaken, because true belief in the heart cannot exist without actions of the body."[574]

He also said: "All the Imāms of the Muslims never deviated from clarifying what the Messenger conveyed if they found a way to do so. Whoever deviates from their path falls into innovation, the essence of which is saying about Allah and His Messenger that which one does not know or that which is not true. This is something Allah and His Messenger have forbidden. Allah said about Shayṭān: "Inaction, he commands you to evil and immorality and to say about Allah that which you do not know" (al-Baqarah 2:169). And He said: "Was not the covenant of the Scripture taken from them that they would not say about Allah except the truth?" (al-Aʿrāf 7:169). This is from the interpretation of the Qur'an by opinion, about which the ḥadīth says: "Whoever speaks about the Qur'an by his opinion, let him take his seat in the Fire.

An example of this is that the Murji'ah , when they turned away from understanding the speech of Allah and His Messenger, began speaking about the meanings of īmānand islām and others

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[573] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/118)
[574] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/555)

with newly invented methods. For instance, they said: "īmān , in the language, means taṣdīq (belief/affirmation), and the Messenger only addressed people in the Arabic language without altering it, so his intent with īmānmust be taṣdīq." Then they added: "Taṣdīq only occurs in the heart and on the tongue, or in the heart alone—so actions are not part of īmān ."[575]

And he said: Many from the people of innovation—such as the Khārijah, Rāfiḍah, Qadariyyah, Jahmiyyah, and Mumaththilah—have adopted beliefs that are misguidance, believing them to be the truth. They declare those who oppose them to be disbelievers. In this way, they resemble the People of the Book in their disbelief in truth and their oppression of creation. Inaction, many of those who make takfīr do so over statements they do not even understand the reality of, nor do they know the evidence for.

Opposing these wrongful takfīr-makers are people who do not know the creed of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamāʿah as it should be known, or they know some of it and are ignorant of the rest. What they do know, they might not clarify to others and instead hide it. They do not forbid innovations that oppose the Qur'an and Sunnah, nor do they criticize or punish the people of bidʿah. In fact, some of them criticize any discussion about the Sunnah and the foundations of the religion in general—without distinguishing between what is established by Qur'an, Sunnah, and ijmāʿ, and what is said by the people of innovation and division. Or, they treat everyone's view as equally valid, as scholars do in areas of ijtihād where differences are permissible. This approach has become widespread among many of the Murji'ah , and among some of the mutafaqqihah, mutaṣawwifah, and mutafalsifah—just as the first approach has overtaken many among the people of desire and speculative theology. Both approaches deviate from the Book and Sunnah."[576]

Ibn al-Qayyim (d. 751 AH):

Ibn al-Qayyim said: "The Murji'ah also labeled those who spoke about īmānaccording to the view of the Companions and the Tābiʿūn—those who added the exception by saying, "I am a believer, if Allah wills"—as being doubtful. This is the way of every false innovator: they give demeaning and isolated labels to truth and its people..."[577]

And he said, speaking of the signs of the people of Sunnah and the signs of the people of innovation: "Among them [i.e., the signs of the people of Sunnah] is that they do not affiliate themselves with any specific doctrine, nor with any individual other than the Messenger. They do not have a distinctive title by which they are known, nor a particular affiliation. Others may

[575] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/288)
[576] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (12/466)
[577] Mukhtaṣar al-Ṣawāʿiq al-Mursalah, p. 144

associate themselves with invented doctrines and their founders. As one of the Imāms of Ahl al-Sunnah said, when asked about the Sunnah, he replied: "The Sunnah is that which has no name except 'Sunnah.'" The people of bidʿah affiliate themselves with doctrines—such as the Qadariyyah and Murji'ah . Or with individuals—such as the Hāshimiyyah, Najjāriyyah, and Ḍarāwiyyah. Or with actions—such as the Khārijah and Rāfiḍah. But Ahl al-Sunnah are free from all of these affiliations. Their only association is with ḥadīth and the Sunnah."[578]

He also said: "When it was toward the end of their era—meaning the era of the ṣaḥābahh—the Shīʿah, the Khārijah, the Qadariyyah, and the Murji'ah emerged. Thus, they distanced themselves from the light upon which the early generations of this Ummah were upon. Yet, they did not completely abandon it. Rather, they erred due to poor understanding of the nuṣūṣ (texts). So those among the ṣaḥābahh and the senior Tābiʿūn who encountered them rebuked them severely from every land. They charged them with grave accusations, disassociated from them, warned others against their path with the strongest of warnings, and they would not greet them nor sit with them."[579]

ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb (1285 AH):

Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Ḥasan said, speaking about the Imāms of the daʿwah: This ṭā'ifah, by the grace of Allah, is upon the manhaj of the ṣaḥābahh in the uṣūl and furūʿ of the religion. Their ḥujjah lies in what Allah and His Messenger said, and in what the ṣaḥābahh, the Tābiʿūn, and the a'immah of Islām were upon. They separated themselves from the people of shirk and ʿibādah al-awthān, showed general enmity toward them, and opposed every mubtadiʿ in their bidʿah—such as the Jahmiyyah, the Muʿtazilah, the Murji'ah , and others among the people of bidʿah, such as the Bāṭiniyyah, the falāsifah, and others."[580]

The Salaf wrote many books on this topic, not a single book doesn't mention them.

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[578] Mukhtaṣar al-Ṣawāʿiq al-Mursalah, p.602
[579] Mukhtaṣar al-Ṣawāʿiq al-Mursalah p. 105
[580] al-Durar al-Saniyyah (1/536)

irjāʾ is one of the foundational innovations which split the ummah

More than one scholar agrees irjāʾ is among the foundational innovations which the ummah split into 72 sects.

Ibn Baṭṭah (d. 387 AH) said: "Know—may Allah have mercy on you—that all of these sects and madhāhib share four foundational roots. All of them deviate from the truth, oppose Islam and its people, and they diverge from these four roots, branching off from them and returning to them. Then the paths continue to branch out further, and desires and ugly opinions take hold, until the divisions become too many to count. As for the four foundational roots by which they are known and to which they return: Abū Bakr al-Najjād narrated—from Yūsuf ibn Asbāṭ: The roots of innovation are four: the Rāfiḍah, the Khārijah, the Qadariyyah, and the Murjiʾah . Then each of these four sects split into eighteen sub-sects, totaling seventy-two sects. The seventy-third is the Jamāʿah, which the Messenger of Allah said is the saved one."[581]

Ḥafṣ ibn Ḥumayd said: I asked ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-Mubārak, "Into how many sects did this Ummah divide?" He replied: "The roots are four: the Shīʿah, the Ḥarūriyyah (i.e., Khārijites), the Qadariyyah, and the Murjiʾah . The Shīʿah split into twenty-two sects, the Ḥarūriyyah into twenty-one, the Qadariyyah into sixteen, and the Murjiʾah into thirteen." I said: "O Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, I haven't heard you mention the Jahmiyyah?" He said: "You only asked me about the sects of the Muslims."[582]

Abū ʿAbd Allāh al-Zubayrī (d. 318 AH) said: "The roots of innovation are four: the Khārijah, the Rāfiḍah, the Qadariyyah, and the Murjiʾah . Each of these groups split into eighteen sects. That makes seventy-two sects, completing what the Messenger of Allah (ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa-sallam) said: 'My Ummah will split into seventy-three sects. One will be saved—it is the Jamāʿah.'"[583]

al-Barbahārī (d. 329 AH) said: "Know—may Allah have mercy on you—that the roots of innovation are four doors. From these four came seventy-two sectarian desires. Then each bidʿah branched off until they became 2,800 views—all of them misguidance and all of them in the Fire except one..."[584]

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[581] al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (292)
[582] al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (295)
[583] Sharḥ al-īmānwa al-Islām wa Tasmiyat al-Firaq wa al-Radd ʿalayhim (11)
[584] Sharḥ al-Sunnah by al-Barbahārī (113)

And he said: "'Abd Allāh ibn al-Mubārak said: The origin of the seventy-two sects are four foundational sectarian desires. From these four, the seventy-two branched out: the Qadariyyah, the Murji'ah , the Shī'ah, and the Khārijah."[585]

Ibn Abī Zayd al-Qayrawānī (d. 386 AH) said in his book al-Jāmi': "The reports have continued regarding the Khārijah, the Qadariyyah, the Murji'ah , and the Rāfiḍah. It is from these groups that the seventy-two sects, which the Messenger (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa-sallam) warned against, branched off. And he mentioned that among his Ummah are those who will fall into division over them."[586]

Abū al-Muẓaffar al-Sam'ānī (d. 489 AH) said: "These four sectarian desires—Qadar, irjā' , the view of the Ḥarūriyyah, and the Rāfiḍah—are the head of all deviant desires. They emerged in the later part of the era of the ṣaḥābahh. When the ṣaḥābahh heard of them, they responded in the manner we've described. We haven't received from them anything showing they debated these sects using rational arguments, nor did they command doing so."[587]

Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 AH) said: "As for specifying the deviated sects, the earliest we know of to have spoken about declaring them astray were Yūsuf ibn Asbāṭ, then 'Abd Allāh ibn al-Mubārak—both of whom were noble a'immah among the leaders of the Muslims. They said: The foundations of innovation are four: the Rāfiḍah, the Khārijah, the Qadariyyah, and the Murji'ah . It was said to Ibn al-Mubārak, 'And the Jahmiyyah?' He replied: 'They are not from the Ummah of Muḥammad.'"[588]

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[585] Sharḥ al-Sunnah by al-Barbahārī (170)
[586] Refer to al-Jāmi' fī 'Aqā'id wa Rasā'il Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Athar (p. 916)
[587] al-Intiṣār li-Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth (p. 53)
[588] Majmū' al-Fatāwā (3/351)

Those who said: irjāʾ is the worst and most vile of doctrines

When the Salaf realized the true nature of the Murji'ah, they feared its spread among the people more than any other sect due to its severe consequence that it carries.. According to this doctrine there is no difference between a mu'min and a fasiq and righteous and wicked, since to them actions have no bearing on īmān, thus the one who prays and abandons prayer are both believer etc, are all equal, both are believers with perfect īmān, equal to the īmān to the close angels.

Ājurrī said: "Whoever says this has committed a monstrous slander against Allah and His Messenger and has spoken in opposition to the truth—something all the scholars reject. For such a person claims that whoever says 'lā ilāha illā Allāh' is not harmed by major sins he commits nor by heinous acts he perpetrates. According to him, the pious righteous person who avoids such acts and the wicked sinner are equal. This is a denial of Allah's words: 'Or do those who commit evil actions think that We will make them equal—in life and death—to those who believe and do righteous actions? Evil is what they judge!' [al-Jāthiyah 45:21]."[589]

Abū Saʿd al-Zanjānī said in his commentary on his Manẓūmah fī al-Sunnah 106, after discussing the sects of the Murji'ah and their differences: "Despite their internal differences, they unanimously agreed on delaying aʿmāl (actions) from īmān , claiming that actions are not part of it. That is why they are called Murji'ah . According to them—even with their divergent views—whoever affirms what they consider to be īmān , even if he does not practice any part of the Sharīʿah, nor avoids any of its prohibitions, is still considered a genuine believer and a friend of Allah, deserving of Paradise, saved from the Fire. Whatever he abandons or commits will not harm him. This is a major innovation in Islam, a nullification of divine promises and warnings, and a contradiction to the Qurʾān and Sunnah. And success is from Allah."

Abū Ḥamzah al-Thumālī al-Aʿwar said: "I said to Ibrāhīm [al-Nakhaʿī]: What do you say about the view of the Murji'ah ?" He replied: "Oh! They have fabricated a doctrine. I fear them for this ummah, and the evil that comes from them is abundant. So beware of them."[590]

And he also said: "The tribulation of the Murji'ah is more feared for this Ummah than the tribulation of the Azāriqah" — meaning: the Khawārij ."[591]

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[589] al-Sharīʿah by Ājurrī [378]
[590] al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (1330)
[591] Al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh (604)

Az-Zuhrī said: “No innovation was introduced into Islam more harmful to its people than this irjā’ .”[592]

Shurayk al-Qāḍī — when the Murji’ah were mentioned — said: “They are the most wicked people. The Rāfiḍah are wicked enough, but the Murji’ah lie against Allah.”[593]

Ḥarb al-Kirmānī, in his ʿAqīdah, said: “The Murji’ah : they are those who claim that īmān is a statement without action, and that īmān is merely the statement, while actions are ordinances. All of this is the saying of the Murji’ah , and it is the most wicked and misguided of sayings, and the furthest from guidance.”[594]

[592] Al-īmān by Abū ʿUbayd (77)
[593] Al-īmān by Aḥmad (543)
[594] al-Sunnah by Ḥarb al-Kirmānī (92)

Those who said: the Murji'ah are the Jews of the qibla

Saʿīd ibn Jubayr (d. 95 AH) said: "The Murji'ah are the Jews of the Qiblah."[595]

Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn (d. 114 AH) said: "The Murji'ah are not night to night, nor day to day, but the Murji'ah are [just like] the Jews."[596]

This comparison that is made with the Jews is because Jews commited major sins and said they'll be forgiven, they claimed their good actions would be accepted and they'll be forgiven.

Allah said about them: "But then there succeeded them successors who inherited the Book; they take the fleeting gains of this lower world and say, 'We will be forgiven.' But if similar gain came their way again, they would again seize it. Was not the covenant of the Book taken from them, that they would not say about Allah except the truth? And they studied what was in it. And the Home of the Hereafter is better for those who fear Allah. Will you not then understand? But those who hold fast to the Book and establish prayer—inaction, We will not allow the reward of the reformers to be lost." [al-Aʿrāf: 169–170]

Saʿīd ibn Jubayr said regarding the verse: "And they take the fleeting gains of this lower world" — "'They commit sins and say: 'We will be forgiven.'"[597]

It is narrated that Ibn ʿAbbās was asked about the verse: "But then there succeeded them successors..." He said: "They are people who turn to the world, devour it, follow the concessions in the Qurʾān, and say: 'We will be forgiven.' Whenever any worldly opportunity came to them, they took it, and said: 'We will be forgiven.'" Mujāhid said: "Whatever worldly desire appeared to them—halāl or ḥarām—they took it, seeking forgiveness, and if the same appeared the next day, they would take it again."[598]

Al-Thaʿlabī said: The commentators said: "The Jews inherited the Book of Allah. They read it, taught it, but neglected acting upon it. They violated its rulings, took bribes for judgments, altered the Book of Allah, and distorted the description of the Messenger of Allah, saying: 'Our sins will be forgiven; what we did at night will be atoned by the day, and what we did during the day will be atoned by the night.' They fabricated lies against Allah."[599]

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[595]As-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh (701)
[596]al-Lālikāʾī (no. 1644)
[597] Tafsīr ʿAbd al-Razzāq (952)
[598] ad-Durr al-Manthūr (3/593)
[599] al-Kashf wa al-Bayān (4/300)

Allah also said about the Jews: “The Fire will not touch us except for a limited number of days. And they were deluded in their religion by what they invented.” [Āl ʿImrān: 24] And He said: “They say: ‘The Fire shall not touch us except for a few numbered days.’ Say: ‘Have you taken a covenant with Allah, for Allah never breaks His covenant? Or do you say about Allah what you do not know?’” [al-Baqarah: 80]

Isḥāq ibn Rāhwayh said: Ibn al-Mubārak came to Rayy, and a man known for worship—likely inclined to the Khawārij —stood up and asked him: “O Abā ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, what do you say about one who commits adultery, steals, and drinks wine?” He replied: “I do not expel him from īmān.” The man said: “O Abā ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, at your age you’ve become a Murji’ī?” He said: “The Murji’ah will not accept me! I say: īmān increases, while the Murji’ah do not say that. The Murji’ah say: “Our good actions are accepted, and our sins are forgiven. If I knew that even one of my good actions had been accepted, I would testify that I am in Paradise.”[600]

Allah said: “Have you not seen those who claim purity for themselves? No! It is Allah who purifies whom He wills, and they will not be wronged [even] as much as a thread.” [An-Nisā’: 49]

Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk said: “The Jews said: ‘We have no sins, except like the sins of our children on the day they are born. If they have sins, then we have sins—so we are like them.’” Allah Almighty said in response: “See how they fabricate lies against Allah! That alone is a clear sin.”[601]

Another aspect of their resemblance to the Jews is what is known from the leaders of the Murji’ah among the people of opinion—resorting to legal trickery (ḥiyal) in issuing fatwas, resembling the Jews in how they circumvented the prohibition of fishing on the Sabbath and other such laws.

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[600] Musnad Isḥāq ibn Rāhwayh (3/671), and ʿAqīdah aṣ-Ṣābūnī (no. 110)
[601] Tafsīr at-Ṭabarī (no. 9735)

Those who likened the Murji'ah to the Sabi'ah

Some of the Imāms likened them to the Sabi'ah, those who leave a religion for another, the sabi'un were named as such because they left the religion of the Jews and Christians.

Reason for likening is the Murji'ah professed tawhid with tongue but abandoned actions from īmān aligning with disbelievers and mushriks.

Allah says: "Turning to Him in repentance, and fear Him, and establish the prayer, and do not be of the polytheists." [Ar-Rūm: 31] And He says: "...and woe to the polytheists, those who do not give zakāh, and they are disbelievers in the Hereafter." [Fussilat: 6–7]

And He says: "And pilgrimage to the House is a duty owed to Allah by people who are able to find a way thereto. But whoever disbelieves — inaction, Allah is free of need from the worlds." [Āl ʿImrān: 97]

The Prophet ﷺ also made the distinction between a Muslim and a disbeliever to be the abandonment of prayer. Whoever abandons it has committed disbelief

Saʿīd ibn Jubayr said: "The example of the Murji'ah is like that of the Ṣābi'ah."[602]

From ʿAṭāʾ ibn as-Sā'ib, who said: Saʿīd ibn Jubayr mentioned the Murji'ah and struck a parable for them. He said: "Their example is like the Ṣābi'ah. They came to the Jews and asked, 'What is your religion?' They replied, 'Judaism.' They asked, 'What is your scripture?' They replied, 'The Torah.' They asked, 'Who is your prophet?' They said, 'Mūsā (Moses).' They asked, 'What is the reward for following you?' They said, 'Paradise.' Then they went to the Christians and asked, 'What is your religion?' They said, 'Christianity.' They asked, 'What is your scripture?' They replied, 'The Gospel.' They asked, 'Who is your prophet?' They replied, "Īsā.' They asked, 'What is the reward for following you?' They said, 'Paradise.' So they said: 'Then we believe in all of it.'"[603]

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[602] Narrated by Aḥmad in al-īmān(no. 193)
[603] Narrated by Aḥmad in al-īmān(no. 195)

Those who said the Murji'ah are Khawārij

Abū ʿAbd Allāh Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal said: "A man from our companions narrated to me, that a man said to ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-Mubārak: "What do you think of the view of the Murji'ah ?" He said: "How could I be a Murji'ī when I do not support the view of the sword? How could I be a Murji'ī when I say: 'īmān is speech and action?'"[604]

Yūsuf ibn Asbāṭ said: "As for the Murji'ah , they say: "īmān is words without action." They believe the sword should be wielded against the ummah of Muḥammad."[605]

Sufyān al-Thawrī said: "As for the Murji'ah , they believe the sword should be wielded against the people of the qiblah."[606]

Aḥmad al-Rabāṭī said: ʿAbd Allāh ibn Ṭāhir said to me: "O Aḥmad, you people hate these people out of ignorance, but I hate them out of knowledge. First, because they do not see obedience to the sultān as obligatory. Second, because they do not consider īmān to have any value."[607]

Among the leaders of the Murji'ah was Dharr al-Hamdānī al-Murhabi. It has been mentioned in his biography that he was an eloquent preacher and judge. He encouraged people to rebel against al-Ḥajjāj with Ibn al-Ashʿath!

Al-Madā'inī said: "When Ibn al-Ashʿath decided to march from Sijistān toward Iraq, he called Dharr al-Hamdānī, and he sent him to encourage the people. He would preach every day and speak against al-Ḥajjāj. Then, the army marched and they removed al-Ḥajjāj from power."[608]

Al-Ḥasan ibn Mūsā al-Ash'ib said: I heard Abū Yūsuf say: "Abū Ḥanīfah used to support the sword." I asked: "What about you?" He replied: "God forbid!"[609]

Ibrāhīm ibn Shamās al-Samarqandī said: A man said to al-Mubārak (while we were with him): "Abū Ḥanīfah was a Murji'ī who supported the sword." Al-Mubārak did not object to this."[610]

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[604] al-Sunnah by Ibn Shahīn (17)
[605] al-Sunnah by al-Ḥarbī (190)
[606] al-Sharīʿah (2286)
[607] ʿAqidah Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth (109)
[608] Tārīkh al-Islām by al-Dhahabī (2/905)
[609] al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh (220)
[610] al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh (219)

Al-Haytham ibn Jamīl said: I heard Abū ʿAwanah say: "Abū Ḥanīfah was a Murjiʾī who supported the sword." When asked about Ḥamād ibn Abī Sulaymān, he said: "He was his teacher in this matter."[611]

Abū Isḥāq al-Fazārī said: "Abū Ḥanīfah was a Murjiʾī who supported the sword."[612]

Al-Mubārakī said: I mentioned Abū Ḥanīfah to al-Awzāʿī, and I spoke about his knowledge and fiqh. I could see anger in al-Awzāʿī's face, and he said: "Do you know what you have just said? You are praising a man who supports the sword against the people of Islam?" I replied: "I do not agree with his view nor his school of thought." He said: "I have advised you, so do not dislike it." I replied: "I accept."[613]

Abū Isḥāq al-Fazārī reported: I heard Sufyān and al-Awzāʿī say: "The Murjiʾah's statement leads to the sword."[614]

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī said: "Every person of innovation is a Ḥarūrī." [Al-Risālah al-Wāfīyah (210)]

Salām ibn Abī Muṭīʿ said: "Ayūb used to call all people of innovation Khawārij , and he said: 'The Khawārij disagreed on names, but they all agreed on the sword.'"[615]

Abū Qilābah said: "No people ever innovated a bidʿah except that they made the sword permissible."[616]

Al-Barbahārī said in his explanation of "Al-Sunnah" (136): "Know that all heresies are corrupt, and all of them call to the sword."

Another reason they are considered Khawārij is that they agree with them on īmān, that it neither increases or decreases, people are equal in their īmān, it is a single entity, if a part is lost all is lost. These are the doctrines of the Khawārij and the Murjiʾah agreed with them.

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[611] Tārīkh Baghdād (1/530)
[612] al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh (307)
[613] al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh (363)
[614] Al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh (345)
[615] Al-Qadar by al-Firyābī (375)
[616] Al-Dārimī (100), al-Lālkāʾī (233)

Those who said Khawārij are Murji'ah

Harb al-Kirmānī described the Khawārij in his "As-Sunnah" as Murji'ah, saying (117): "As for the Khawārij : they call Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamāʿah 'Murji'ah.' The Khawārij have lied in this claim. Rather, they are the Murji'ah, for they claim to possess īmānand truth to the exclusion of others, and they declare anyone who opposes them to be disbelievers."

They also resemble Murji'ah in other ways – they defer judgement on those who join them in rebellion against the ruler, even if those people are stepped in severe innovation that constitute major sins – just as Murji'ah defer judgement on people of major sin and innovation.

You find in their ranks, and among the scholars they praise and defend, Qadariyyah, Murji'ah, Jahmiyyah, Ashʿariyyah, Rāfiḍah, grave-worshippers — and they are unbothered by this as long as they all support armed rebellion against the rulers. Meanwhile, they declare sinful monotheists to be disbelievers, even though those sinners are in a better state than the innovators and sectarians the Khawārij align with.

Harb al-Kirmānī said in his "As-Sunnah" (106): "As for the Khawārij , they exited the religion. They rebelled against the rulers and the Imāms, raised the sword against the Ummah, made their blood and wealth lawful, and declared disbelievers all who opposed them — except those who shared their views, adopted their ideology, and remained with them in their abode of misguidance."

Those who said Munāfiq is in a better state then Murji'ah

Ibn Baṭṭah said: "Whoever claims to affirm the obligations but does not fulfill or act upon them, and claims that illicit acts and abominations are forbidden yet does not refrain from them, and still considers himself a believer — has denied the Book and what the Messenger brought. He is like the Munāfiq who said, 'We believe with our mouths but their hearts did not believe' [al-Mā'idah: 41]. Allah belied them, rejected their claim, and called them Munāfiq, whose abode is the lowest depth of Hellfire.

Inaction, the Munāfiq are in a better state than the Murji'ah. The Munāfiq denied actions but still performed them. The Murji'ah affirmed actions with their tongues, but denied them through inaction. So whoever denies something in his heart but affirms it with his tongue and performs it with his limbs is in a better state than one who affirms it with his tongue but refuses to act upon it. The Murji'ah deny what they claim to affirm, and belie what they claim to believe. Thus, they are in a worse state than the Munāfiq. Woe to one whose proof is not the Qur'an and the Sunnah — how astray his path, how dark his mind, and how wretched his state."[617]

[617] al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (1155)

Refutation of the phrase - Murji'at Ahl As-Sunnah or Murji'at Al-Sunnah

Some individuals ascribing themselves to the sunnah will label some of the Murji'ah as the above. Not a single Imām of Ahl As-Sunnah has ever done this. It has Become clear those who follow the doctrine of the Murji'ah themselves have used this term. Why don't we do the same with the other deviant groups? Such as Khawārij of Ahl As-Sunnah, Ashāʿirah of Ahl As-Sunnah, Rafidha of Ahl As-Sunnah etc. there is no difference in these statements.

Al-Shahrastānī (d. 548 AH) said: "Abū Ḥanīfah and his companions used to be called 'Murji'at al-Sunnah.' Many among the authors of sectarian works counted him among the Murji'ah..."[618]

ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Laknawī al-Ḥanafī al-Māturīdī (d. 1264 AH) said: "irjāʾ ' is used in two ways: First: the irjāʾ ' that is misguidance — as previously mentioned, referring to the irjāʾ ' of the Jahmiyyah, which is belief in mere knowledge without action. Second: the irjāʾ ' that is not misguidance, and whose adherents are not outside Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamāʿah. For this reason, they mention that the Murji'ah are of two types: the Murji'ah of misguidance and the Murji'at Ahl al-Sunnah. And Abū Ḥanīfah, his students, his teachers, and others among the trustworthy transmitters were only ever considered among Murji'at Ahl al-Sunnah, not the Murji'ah of misguidance."[619]

Al-Kawtharī, the Ḥanafī Jahmī (d. 1371 AH), said while discussing "the irjāʾ ' of the jurists": "This is irjāʾ ' of the Sunnah which does not exceed the truth. Claiming otherwise falls into the creed of the Khawārij or the Muʿtazilah."[620]

This is clear falsehood and deception and it is clear they have followed the people of deviation.

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[618] al-Milal wa al-Niḥal (p. 141)
[619] al-Rafʿ wa al-Takmīl (p. 361)
[620] See his footnote on al-Farq Bayn al-Firaq, p. 123]

Refutation that the disagreement between Ahl As-Sunnah and Murji'ah is only verbal or superficial

Some who affiliate themselves with Ahl As-Sunnah attempt to downplay the severity of the disagreement. Perhaps one only looked at the end ruling regarding the fate of the major sinner according to both groups – that neither declares him to be a disbeliever in this world nor do they assert he will dwell eternally in the fire, rather he is under the will of allah.

Another point could be that early leaders of Murji'ah agreed with Salaf that actions are required and legislated in islam, but differed whether they are a part of īmān or merely a result and external fruit of it. This stems from lack of knowledge.

Whoever carefully examines statements of the Salaf and Imāms of the Sunnah regarding the Murji'ah – will know how they excluded it from the fold of the sunnah, labeled it a bid'ah, strongly denounced its leaders, warned against them by name, and wrote many works against them.

How can it be said that obligatory acts like prayer etc. are not part of īmān but rather religious duties that one may fulfil and neglect and still be considered a complete believer – that this is mere verbal? How can one claim the one who rejects explicit text in Qur'ān about the increase and decrease of īmān and hold contrary beliefs is mere verbal disagreement?

What then is said to the one who does istithnā' and declares those who say it as disbeliever and doubters in their religion? How can one who is a wine drinker, fornicator, killer etc is considered a complete believer. Can one who equates the īmān of the angels and prophets to wicked and evil be considered as holding mere verbal differences with Ahl As-Sunnah?

The disagreement between Ahl As-Sunnah and the Murji'ah is significant and major. Even the Murji'ah recognised this and prohibited marriage to Ahl As-Sunnah who allowed istithnā', due to this person being a doubter, and the doubter is a disbeliever. Some attribute this mere verbal disagreement to Ibn Taymiyyah. Ibn Taymiyyah never affirms this, rather he mentions this only in specific issues, where the dispute would have been purely forman and verbal.

Like in the issue whether outward actions are among necessary consequences of īmān of the heart and absence of these actions indicate absence of īmān, in this situation if the Murji'ah agreed, the dispute would be verbal.

He said: “If one says: they (the outward actions) are among its necessary consequences, and that internal īmān necessitates righteous outward actions—then after this, whether he says that these actions are part of the definition (musammā) of īmān or merely necessary consequences of it becomes a verbal dispute”[621]

Yet he made it clear in other places that much of the disagreement with them is not verbal, but substantial. He said: “People have differed extensively over the term mu’min and īmān —some of this disagreement is verbal, but much of it is substantial (maʿnawī).”[622]

So how could it be consistent to attribute to him the unrestricted claim that the dispute is merely verbal—while he himself stated: “And whoever claims that the obligatory īmāncan exist without doing any obligatory actions—whether he considers those actions part of īmān or only necessary consequences of it—saying this is a verbal dispute, is clearly mistaken. This is the innovation (bidʿa) of the Murji’a, which the Salaf and leading scholars strongly opposed, and about which they made harsh statements well known.”[623]

He also said: “The Salaf were severe in their criticism of the Murji’a when they removed action from īmān and claimed that people are equal in īmān. No doubt, their statement that people are equal in īmān is among the gravest errors. People are not equal in belief, nor in love, nor in fear, nor in knowledge. Rather, they vary in these aspects in many ways. Furthermore, by excluding action, they imply the exclusion of the actions of the heart as well—and this is certainly false. For whoever believes in the Messenger while hating him and opposing him with both heart and body is, by necessity, a disbeliever—even if they include the actions of the heart in īmān , they have still erred. For it is impossible for īmān to exist in the heart without any bodily movement.”[624]

He also said: “Hammād ibn Abī Sulaymān and those who followed him denied the varying degrees of īmān , its inclusion of actions, and the permissibility of saying ‘I am a believer, if Allah wills.’ These are the Murji’at al-fuqahā’. As for Ibrāhīm al-Nakhaʿī—the Imāms of Kūfa and teacher of Hammād ibn Abī Sulaymān—and those like him, and those before him among the companions of Ibn Masʿūd such as ʿAlqama and al-Aswad, they were among the most severe in opposing the Murji’a. They used to allow the conditional statement (‘I am a believer, in shā’ Allāh’). But Hammād ibn Abī Sulaymān opposed his predecessors, and he was followed by others. Groups from Kūfa and beyond entered into this innovation. Then the Salaf and Imāms

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[621] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/584)
[622] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/504)
[623] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/621)
[624] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/556)

strongly condemned these individuals, declared them innovators, and harshly criticized them."[625]

He repeatedly affirms the agreement of the Salaf in opposing the Murji'ah , denouncing them, labeling them with innovation, and he clarifies in many places the corruption of their doctrine and how it opposes both sound transmission (naql ṣaḥīḥ) and clear reason (ʿaql ṣarīḥ).

All of this indicates clearly that whoever attributed to Ibn Taymiyyah the opinion that the disagreement was merely verbal has made a serious mistake and has missed the truth.

Among those who held this opinion but was opposed in it is Ibn Abī al-ʿIzz al-Ḥanafī in his commentary on al-ʿAqīda al-Ṭaḥāwiyya (2/462), where he said: "The disagreement between Abū Ḥanīfa and the remaining Imāms of Ahl al-Sunnah is a formal one, because the idea that bodily actions are either necessary for the īmān of the heart or a part of īmān —while agreeing that the one who commits a major sin does not leave īmān , but is under Allāh's will, if He wills He punishes him, and if He wills He forgives him—is a verbal dispute, and does not lead to a corrupt belief."

He stated this unconditionally. But Shaykh Ibn Bāz (raḥimahu Allāh) refuted him, saying:

> **وإخراج العمل من الإيمان هو قول المرجئة، وليس الخلاف بينهم وبين أهل السنة فيه لفظيا، بل هو لفظي ومعنوي، ويترتب عليه أحكام كثيرة يعلمها من تدبر كلام أهل السُّنَّة وكلام المرجئة، والله المستعان . اهـ .**

"To exclude action from īmān is the view of the Murji'ah , and the disagreement between them and Ahl al-Sunnah is not merely verbal. Rather, it is both verbal and substantial, and it results in many implications, known to those who contemplate the statements of Ahl al-Sunnah and of the Murji'a. And Allāh is the One whose help is sought."

Among those who called for dropping the dispute was Ad-Dhahabī, he once claimed it was a verbal dispute, another time he considered it light, and another time it should not be criticized and the school is respectable.

He said: "The irjā' of the jurists is that they do not consider prayer and zakāh to be part of īmān. They say: īmān is verbal affirmation (iqrār) with the tongue and certainty in the heart. The dispute over this, if Allāh wills, is verbal."[626]

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[625] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/507)
[626] Siyar Aʿlām al-Nubalā' (5/233)

And he called for refraining from harshness toward the leading Murji'ah scholars and from declaring them innovators or warning against them. He said: "There is no weight to al-Sulaymānī's claim that Musʿar, Ḥammād ibn Abī Sulaymān, al-Nuʿmān, ʿAmr ibn Murrah, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Abī Rawwād, Abū Muʿāwiyah, and ʿUmar ibn Dharr (and he listed more) were Murji'ah ."

Al-Dhahabī commented: "irjā' is a school followed by several great scholars, so one should not be harsh toward those who adopt it!"[627]

But those who criticized these and others accused of irjā' were the leading Imāms of the ummah —such as Ibrāhīm al-Nakhaʿī, Mālik, al-Shāfiʿī, the two Sufyāns, the two Ḥammāds, Ibn al-Mubārak, Aḥmad, Isḥāq, al-Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Zurʿah, Abū Ḥātim, and many others.

In action, al-Dhahabī spoke the truth when he said in Kitab al-Arsh regarding a Sunnah-related issue contested by the innovators: "If these Imāms—Abū Isḥāq al-Sabīʿī, al-Thawrī, al-Aʿmash, Isrā'īl, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Mahdī, Abū Aḥmad al-Zubayrī, Wakīʿ, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, and others whose mention would be too lengthy—who are the lanterns of guidance and the lamps in the darkness, have accepted this ḥadīth, narrated it, not rejected it, and not criticized its chain—then who are we to reject it and be overly clever in opposition to them?"

This is a statement of truth and correctness, consistent with the way of Ahl al-Sunnah. By this very principle, we reject al-Dhahabī's own statements in which he softened his stance toward irjā' and its adherents.

He also argued irjā' should be considered a valid school simply due to some jurist adhering to it. He said, in the biography of ʿAbd al-Majīd ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Abī Rawwād: "The humility of Wakīʿ, along with his leadership in the Sunnah, elevated his status, unlike the humility of this Murji'ī—may Allāh forgive him. May Allāh protect us and you from contradicting the Sunnah. Inaction, there were many scholars in this ummah upon irjā' . So why should it not be considered a valid school? Their view is: 'I am truly a believer in the sight of Allāh at this moment,' while admitting they do not know on what state a Muslim will die—whether upon belief or disbelief. This is a light view..."[628] and so on.

How can it be a valid school when it contradicts Ahl As-Sunnah on core principle, **they spoke harshly towards early Murji'ah.**

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[627] Mīzān al-Iʿtidāl (4/99)
[628] Siyar Aʿlām al-Nubalā'(9/436)

Regarding the fact the Murji'ah are among the sects of muslims

Ahl As-Sunnah agreed on declaring Murji'ah as innovators. The Salaf did not declare early Murji'ah as disbelievers. Only the Jahmiyyah Murji'ah who say īmān is mere knowledge and affirmation.

Ḥafṣ ibn Ḥumayd said: I asked ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-Mubārak, "Into how many sects has this ummah split?" He replied: "The root is four sects: the Shīʿah, the Ḥarūriyyah, the Qadariyyah, and the Murji'ah . The Shīʿah divided into twenty-two sects, the Ḥarūriyyah into twenty-one sects, the Qadariyyah into sixteen sects, and the Murji'ah into thirteen sects." I said: "Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, I didn't hear you mention the Jahmiyyah?" He said: "You asked me about the sects of the Muslims."[629]

Ismāʿīl ibn Saʿīd said: I asked Aḥmad, "Do you fear that disbelief could enter upon someone who says, 'īmān is statement without action'?" He replied: "He is not declared a disbeliever by that."[630]

Abū Ḥātim and Abū Zurʿah, in their creed where they transmitted the consensus of the scholars, said: "We met the scholars in all the lands—Ḥijāz, ʿIrāq, Miṣr, Shām, and Yemen—and from their creed was:" They said: "The Murji'ah are innovators, astray. And the Jahmiyyah are disbelievers." End quote.

They made a distinction between the two in ruling.

Ibn Taymiyyah said: "Even the Imāms such as Wakīʿ ibn al-Jarrāḥ, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, and Abū ʿUbayd and others declared disbelievers those who defined īmānwith such a statement—as opposed to the juristic Murji'ah who say that īmān is affirmation of the heart and tongue. These were not declared disbelievers by any of the Imāms, rather they were declared innovators."[631]

There are some statements which may imply takfir and its clarification:

Ḥarb al-Kirmānī said in his "as-Sunnah" (172): I heard Isḥāq (Ibn Rāhawayh), and a man asked him, "What about someone who says, 'I am truly a believer'?" He replied, "He is truly a disbeliever."

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[629] al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (295)
[630] al-Sunnah by al-Khallāl (972)
[631] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (10/748)

Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal disagreed with him saying: "We do not like to say 'I am truly a believer,' but we do not declare as disbeliever one who says it."[632]

Ibn Baṭṭah narrated, with his chain from Wakīʿ, who said: "The Qadariyyah say: the matter is yet to come; that Allāh did not decree calamities or actions. The Murji'ah say: speech suffices in place of actions. The Jahmiyyah say: knowledge alone suffices without speech or action. Wakīʿ said: All of this is disbelief."[633]

Apparent meaning of this report is that murji'ah are disbelievers, but clear statements from Wakīʿ deny this.

al-Bukhārī narrated from Wakīʿ, who said: "Beware of these Murji'ah , and these Jahmiyyah. The Jahmiyyah are disbelievers, and al-Murīsī is a Jahmī. You already know how they disbelieved: they said knowledge alone is enough — and that is disbelief. The Murji'ah say: īmān is a statement without action — and this is a bidʿah (innovation)."[634]

Ājurrī said: Whoever says: "īmān is a statement without action" — it is said to him: You have rejected the Qur'ān, the Sunnah, the consensus of the scholars, departed from the view of the Muslims, and disbelieved in Allāh the Almighty.

If he says: "Why?" it is said to him: Verily, Allāh commanded the believers — after affirming their īmān — to pray, give zakāh, fast, perform ḥajj, engage in jihād, and fulfill many other obligations too numerous to mention, while warning them severely of punishment for falling short.

So whoever claims that Allāh imposed all of these obligations on the believers but did not intend for them to act on them, and is content with mere speech — has opposed Allāh and His Messenger."[635]

Many scholars have stated that whoever says Allāh legislated these rulings without intending people to act on them has committed disbelief.

Ibn Baṭṭah said: "Beware — may Allāh have mercy on you — of sitting with a people who have exited the religion. They have rejected the revelation, opposed the Messenger, and departed

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[632] al-Sunnah by al-Khallāl (959)
[633] al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (1356)
[634] Khalq Afʿāl al-ʿIbād (41)
[635] al-Sharīʿah (372)

from the consensus of the Muslim scholars. They are people who say: īmān is a statement without action.

They say: Allāh obligated the duties on His servants but did not intend that they act upon them, and it does not harm them to abandon them. He forbade the prohibitions, but they are still believers even if they commit them. According to them, īmān is to acknowledge the obligations, even if they are not done, and to recognize the prohibitions, even if they are not avoided.

They say: knowledge of Allāh is sufficient for īmān, and whoever knows Allāh in his heart is a believer. And that the one who professes with his tongue and knows with his heart has perfect īmānequal to the īmān of Jibrīl. And that īmān neither increases nor decreases.

And that no one has any superiority over another — the diligent and the negligent, the obedient and the disobedient, are all the same.

He said: All of this is disbelief and misguidance, and it removes its people from the religion of Islam. Allāh, His Messenger, and the scholars — by consensus — have declared such views to be disbelief."[636]

<u>These are the beliefs of the Jahmī Murji'ah concerning īmān, and whoever adopts them all has disbelieved. The Murji'ah differ from them by defining īmān as affirmation and statement.</u>

Qaḥṭānī said in his Nūniyyah (verse 228), as cited in Jāmiʿ ʿAqā'id Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Athar: Their Murji'ī belittles their ability, and both sects, to me, are disbelievers.

This may indicate that he meant the Jahmī Murji'ah — whom the scholars agreed to be disbelievers.

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[636] al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (1335)

The position of the Salaf and their followers towards those accused of irjāʾ

This is in regards to how Salaf treated individuals accused of irjāʾ and how the Salaf dealt with them – warning against them, abandoning them, prohibiting sitting with them or accompanying them or taking knowledge from them – this is due to preserving the religion.

Al-Tirmidhī said: "Some who lack understanding have criticized the people of ḥadīth for speaking about men (narrators), but we have found more than one of the Imāms from among the tābiʿīn who spoke about narrators. Among them were al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and Ṭāwūs, who both spoke against Maʿbad al-Juhani. Saʿīd ibn Jubayr criticized Ṭalq ibn Ḥabīb. Ibrāhīm al-Nakhaʿī and ʿĀmir al-Shaʿbī spoke against al-Ḥārith al-Aʿwar.

Similarly, it has been reported from Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī, ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAwn, Sulaymān al-Taymī, Shuʿbah ibn al-Ḥajjāj, Sufyān al-Thawrī, Mālik ibn Anas, al-Awzāʿī, ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-Mubārak, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Mahdī, and others from among the scholars, that they spoke about men and declared them weak. What motivated them — and Allāh knows best — was sincere advice to the Muslims. We do not think they intended personal attacks or backbiting; rather, they wanted to clarify the weakness of such individuals so that they would be recognized as such. Some of those declared weak were people of innovation, others were accused regarding their ḥadīth, and others were careless or frequently mistaken. These Imāms sought to clarify their states out of compassion for the religion and a need for precision — for bearing witness in religion deserves more caution than bearing witness in matters of wealth and rights."[637]

Ibn Taymiyyah said: This is the view of the jurists among the people of ḥadīth, such as Aḥmad and others — that whoever calls to innovation deserves punishment to repel his harm from the people. Even if, inwardly, he may be striving and sincere, the least of his punishment is that he is to be boycotted. He should not have status in the religion, his knowledge should not be taken, he should not be appointed to judgeship, and his testimony should not be accepted. Mālik's position is close to this. For this reason, the compilers of the Ṣaḥīḥ collections did not narrate from those who were callers to innovation.[638]

He also said: As for the Imāms of innovation — from among those who hold beliefs contrary to the Book and Sunnah, or perform acts of worship contrary to the Book and Sunnah — clarifying their reality and warning the Ummah about them is an obligation by consensus of the Muslims. It was said to Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal: "Which do you prefer — a man who fasts, prays, and performs iʿtikāf, or one who speaks out against the people of innovation?" He said: "If he

[637] Kitāb al-ʿIlal (6/443)
[638] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (7/385)

fasts, prays, and performs iʿtikāf, that is for his own self. But if he speaks out against the people of innovation, that is for the Muslims — and that is better."[639]

He also said: "Likewise, when the scholars clarify the errors of someone who has made a mistake in narrating from the Prophet, or who has deliberately lied about him or about those who transmit knowledge from him — and when they clarify the mistake of someone in an opinion they held regarding a religious matter, whether in belief or practice — then if a person speaks about this with knowledge and justice, intending sincere advice, then Allah will reward him for that. Especially if the person being spoken about is a caller to innovation — in that case, it becomes obligatory to make his condition known to the people, for repelling his harm is more important than repelling the harm of a highway robber."[640]

This is a legal duty (wājib sharʿī) that Allah has imposed upon the people of knowledge — to clarify it to the people and not to conceal it. And this truth and obligation does not contradict the statement of the Prophet: "Do not abuse the dead, for they have already reached what they sent ahead."[641]

Ibn Ḥajar said: "This ḥadīth has been used as evidence for the general prohibition of cursing the dead. But as mentioned previously, its generality is restricted. The most correct view is that the disbelievers and the openly sinful among the dead may have their faults mentioned, for the purpose of warning against them and making people averse to their way. And the scholars have agreed on the permissibility of criticizing weak narrators — both the living and the dead."[642]

<u>Among the Murji'ah whom the Salaf warned against severely and strongly rebuked was:</u>

Ibrāhīm ibn Yazīd al-Taymī al-Kūfī (d. 92 AH)

Abū Zurʿah said: "He is trustworthy, but a Murjiʾī."[643]

Abū Ḥamzah al-Aʿwar said: I came to Ibrāhīm al-Nakhaʿī and said, "Some people are saying that you have followed the opinion of Ibrāhīm al-Taymī." He laughed and said: "Do you see me as a foul-mouthed Murjiʾī? There is no one from among the people of the Qiblah more misguided in my eyes than the Murji'ah ."[644]

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[639] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (28/231)
[640] Minhāj al-Sunnah (5/146)
[641] Narrated by al-Bukhārī (1361)
[642] Fatḥ al-Bārī (3/259)
[643] Tahdhīb al-Kamāl 2/232)
[644] al-Sunnah by Ibn Shāhīn (13)

Bashshār ibn Mūsá said: It was said to Sharīk, while we were with him: "O Abā ʿAbd Allāh, did people of differing desires use to visit one another?" He said: "No. Mughīrah told us that al-Taymī gave salām to al-Nakhaʿī, and he did not return it. And Dharr gave salām to Saʿīd ibn Jubayr, and he did not return it." It was said: "Why, O Abā ʿAbd Allāh?" He said: "Because they held to irjāʾ , claiming that prayer is not part of īmān, and that īmān is only a statement. And Abū Isḥāq narrated to us from al-Barāʾ regarding the statement of Allah: 'And Allah would never cause your īmān to be lost' [al-Baqarah: 143] — he said: 'Your prayer toward Bayt al-Maqdis.'"[645]

Dharr ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Murhabī al-Hamdanī (d. 99 AH)

Ibn Hāniʾ said: I said to Abū ʿAbd Allāh (Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal): "Who was the first to speak about īmān? He replied: They say the first to speak about it was Dharr."[646]

Al-Ḥasan ibn ʿUbayd Allāh said: I heard Ibrāhīm [al-Nakhaʿī] say to Dharr: "Woe to you, O Dharr! What is this dīn you have brought?!" Dharr said: "It is only a raʾy (personal opinion) I had." Then I heard Dharr say: "Inaction, it is the dīn of Allah — all that Allah sent Nūḥ with."[647]

Ibrāhīm said: "If you meet Dharr, declare your disassociation from me in front of him."[648]

Ibn ʿAwn said: Ibrāhīm al-Nakhaʿī used to censure Dharr for his statement in irjāʾ.[649]

Al-Mughīrah said: Dharr gave salām to Ibrāhīm al-Nakhaʿī, but he did not return it — because Dharr held the view of irjāʾ.[650]

Abū al-Mukhtār reported: Dharr complained to Abū al-Bakhtarī al-Ṭāʾī about Saʿīd ibn Jubayr, saying: "I passed by and gave him salām, and he did not respond to me!" So Abū al-Bakhtarī mentioned it to Saʿīd ibn Jubayr. Saʿīd said: "This man renews a new dīn every day — by Allah, I will never speak to him again."[651]

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[645] al-Sunnah by Ḥarb (206)
[646] al-Masāʾil (1901)
[647] al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh (674)
[648] al-Radd ʿalā Ahl al-Ahwāʾ by al-Malṭī (19)
[649] Kitāb al-Īmān by Imām Aḥmad (3/394)
[650] Tahdhīb al-Kamāl (8/512)
[651] al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh (652)

Ḥabīb said: I was with Saʿīd ibn Jubayr in a masjid, and we began discussing Dharr in our conversation. He spoke harshly of him. I said: "O Abā ʿAbd Allāh, he praises you greatly when he mentions you." He replied: "Don't you see that he is ḍāll (misguided)? Every day he is seeking a new dīn!"[652]

Ṭalq ibn Ḥabīb al-ʿAnazī al-Baṣrī (before the first century AH)

Ibn Abī Ḥātim said in **al-Jarḥ wa al-Taʿdīl** that Abū Zurʿah was asked about Ṭalq ibn Ḥabīb, and he replied: "He was a Kūfan who heard from Ibn ʿAbbās, and he is trustworthy; however, he held the view of irjāʾ ."

Abū al-Ḥasan al-Kūfī said: He was a tābiʿī, trustworthy, and among the most devout of his time.

Abū al-Fatḥ al-Azdī said: He was a caller to his doctrine, so the scholars abandoned him.

Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī said: Saʿīd ibn Jubayr saw me sitting with Ṭalq ibn Ḥabīb. Ayyūb said: "I have not seen anyone in Baṣrah more devout or more dutiful to his parents than Ṭalq — and he held the view of the Murjiʾah ." Saʿīd said: "Did I not see you sitting with him? Do not sit with him." Ayyūb said: "By Allah, he was sincere and I did not seek advice from him."

Ḥammād ibn Abī Sulaymān al-Kūfī, the jurist (d. 120 AH)

Jarīr said: Ḥammād ibn Abī Sulaymān was a leader among the Murjiʾah .

Maymūn Abū Ḥamzah said: Ibrāhīm al-Nakhaʿī said to us: "Do not let this cursed man enter upon me after he spoke with irjāʾ " — meaning Ḥammād.[653]

Jarīr said: al-Mughīrah used to narrate from Ḥammād and would say: "Ḥammād narrated to me before he was afflicted" — meaning with irjāʾ.[654]

Jarīr also said: al-Mughīrah would say: "Ḥammād narrated to us before he became a Murjiʾī." Sometimes he would say: "Ḥammād narrated to us before he became corrupt."[655]

Manṣūr said: Ḥammād narrated to us before he innovated what he innovated.[656]

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[652] al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh (652)
[653] al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh [ibn Aḥmad], 766; al-Ḍuʿafāʾ by al-ʿUqaylī (1488)
[654] al-Ḍuʿafāʾ by al-ʿUqaylī (1480)
[655] Sharḥ Uṣūl Iʿtiqād by al-Lālakāʾī, 1681)
[656] Tārīkh Ibn Maʿīn, 2125; al-Ḍuʿafāʾ by al-ʿUqaylī, 1481)

Ibn ʿAwf said: Ḥammād ibn Abī Sulaymān was one of our companions until he innovated what he innovated. He said: He innovated irjāʾ.[657]

Maʿmar said, reporting: When we would leave from Abū Isḥāq, he would say to us: "From where have you come?" We would say: "From Ḥammād." He would say: "And what did the brother of the Murji'ah say to you?"[658]

Ḥammād ibn Zayd said: Ḥammād ibn Abī Sulaymān came to us in Baṣrah. Ayyūb did not go to him, so we did not go to him. He said: Whenever Ayyūb refrained from going to someone, we also refrained.[659]

Sufyān reported: Al-Aʿmash used to meet Ḥammād, but after he spoke about irjāʾ , he stopped giving him salām.[660]

Al-Naḍr ibn Shumayl reported from Ibn ʿAwf: "Strange is Ḥammād! He used to inform (Ibrāhīm) about Dharr [al-Murjī], then he himself entered into irjāʾ !" Ibn ʿAwf never spoke a word to Ḥammād after he manifested what he did. I asked: "What did he manifest?" He said: "irjāʾ ." He encountered him on the road and turned away from him, despite the closeness and familiarity between them. I asked: "When was that?" He said: "During the nights of Ibrāhīm [al-Nakhaʿī]."[661]

ʿAbd Allāh ibn Idrīs said: I was once with al-Aʿmash and he asked me: "What do you know about al-Qasāmah [oath-taking case]?" I said: "My father narrated to me, from Ḥammād, from Saʿīd ibn Jubayr." He said: "You mention Ḥammād to me? I won't narrate to you for a whole month!"[662]

Shuʿbah said: I was with Zubayd, and we passed by Ḥammād ibn Abī Sulaymān. He (Zubayd) said: "Move away from this man — he has introduced an innovation."[663]

Mālik ibn Anas said: The people of Baṣrah, in our eyes, were the people of Iraq. They were the true people. And there were inaction men in Kūfah — ʿAlqamah, al-Aswad, and Shurayḥ — until a man named Ḥammād arose, interjected into this religion, and spoke about it with his

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[657] al-Sunnah by al-Khallāl (1063)
[658] al-Ḍuʿafāʾ by al-ʿUqaylī, (1483); Siyar Aʿlām al-Nubalāʾ (5/233)
[659] Ṭabaqāt Ibn Saʿd, 7/286
[660] al-Ḍuʿafāʾ by al-ʿUqaylī, 1504
[661] al-Ḍuʿafāʾ by al-ʿUqaylī, 1499)
[662] al-Ḍuʿafāʾ by al-ʿUqaylī, 1475)
[663] al-Kāmil by Ibn ʿAdī, 4408)

own opinion. Then another man, called Abū Ḥanīfah, came close behind him — and the people became corrupt. Allah is the one sought for help. “And We adorned for them what they adorned [in their falsehood]” [al-Anʿām: 137].[664]

Sufyān said: Ibn Abī Laylā and al-Ḥajjāj were with al-Ḥakam, and they had disassociated — meaning: from Ḥammād. Sufyān said: Ḥammād had introduced something new, so they distanced themselves from him.[665]

Abū Bakr ibn ʿAyyāsh said: If Ḥammād ibn Abī Sulaymān were handed over to me, I would crush his neck.[666]

Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr said: This is Ḥammād ibn Abī Sulaymān — the jurist of Kūfah after al-Nakhaʿī, the one who held its fatwā position, and the teacher of Abū Ḥanīfah. He is the one about whom Ibrāhīm al-Nakhaʿī said, when asked, “Who should be asked after you?” — he said, “Ḥammād.” He sat in his place after him. Yet he speaks about ʿAṭāʾ, Ṭāwūs, and Mujāhid — those who are, to all, more pleasing than him, more knowledgeable of the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger, and in every way better than him. None of them were accused of irjāʾ , while Ḥammād was — and he was criticized for it. And from him Abū Ḥanīfah took it. And Allah knows best.[667]

Ḥarb al-Kirmānī said: “The people of desires, innovation, and dispute have invented hideous and disgraceful labels with which they name the people of the Sunnah, intending to criticize and slander them. As for the Murji’ah , they call the people of the Sunnah ‘the doubters’ — and the Murji’ah have lied, for they are more deserving of doubt and denial.”[668]

Abū Umayyah ʿAbd al-Karīm ibn Abī al-Mukhāriq (d. 126 AH):

Ḥammād ibn Zayd reported from Khālid who said: Abū Qilābah said to us: “Beware of so-and-so, the one with the cloaks.” I told my father, and he said: “He means Abū Umayyah ʿAbd al-Karīm.”[669]

Mu’ammal said: Ḥammād ibn Zayd said: “I used to go to ʿAbd al-Karīm, and if Ayyūb had known, that would have been the end.”[670]

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[664] al-Kāmil fī al-Ḍuʿafāʾ (4433)
[665] Musnad Ibn al-Jaʿd (355)
[666] al-Kāmil by Ibn ʿAdī, 4426)
[667] Jāmiʿ Bayān al-ʿIlm, 2/1098)
[668] al-Sunnah by Ḥarb al-Kirmān (112)
[669] al-ʿIlal by Aḥmad (5735)
[670] al-Kāmil by Ibn ʿAdī (1496)

Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal said: "'Abd al-Karīm Abū Umayyah al-Baṣrī is nothing — almost abandoned. He used to call to irjāʾ . He is the son of Abī al-Mukhāriq and settled in Mecca, where he used to teach."[671]

Abū Dāwūd said: "The Murji'ah of Basra are: ʿAbd al-Karīm Abū Umayyah, ʿUthmān ibn Ghayyāth, and al-Qāsim ibn al-Faḍl."[672]

Sālim ibn ʿAjlān al-Afṭas, the mawlā of Banū Umayyah (d. 132 AH):

Al-Jawzajānī said: "Sālim ibn ʿAjlān al-Afṭas used to dispute over al-irjāʾ ', being a caller to it, and he remained firm upon it."[673]

Maʿqil ibn ʿUbayd Allāh al-ʿAbsī said: "Sālim al-Afṭas came to us promoting al-irjāʾ ' and presented it to the people; our companions turned away from him with intense aversion. The strongest in their aversion were Maymūn ibn Mihrān and ʿAbd al-Karīm ibn Mālik. As for ʿAbd al-Karīm, he vowed to Allah that he would never be under the same roof with Sālim except in the masjid."[674]

Abū Khālid Furwah ibn Yaḥyā narrated: He used to sit with ʿAbd al-Karīm Khuṣayf, and when Sālim al-Afṭas came to them from Iraq and spoke something regarding al-irjāʾ ', they left the gathering. He said: "I would sometimes see him sitting alone, and no one would sit with him."[675]

Mubārak ibn Ḥassān said: I asked Sālim al-Afṭas, "A man obeyed Allah and never disobeyed Him, and another disobeyed Allah and never obeyed Him—so the obedient one goes to Allah and is admitted into Paradise, and the disobedient one goes to Allah and is admitted into Hellfire. Do they differ in īmān (īmān)?" He replied: "No."

So I mentioned this to ʿAṭāʾ, and he said: "Ask them—is īmān pure (ṭayyib) or impure (khabīth)? For Allah said: "So that Allah may separate the impure from the pure, and pile the impure upon one another, then heap them all together, and cast them into Hell. It is they who are the losers." (Qur'an 8:37) He said: "I asked them, but they gave me no answer." Then the

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[671] al-Kāmil by Ibn ʿAdī (1496)
[672] Masāʾil Abī ʿUbayd al-Ājurrī (424)
[673] Aḥwāl al-Rijāl (327)
[674] As-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh [806]
[675]al-Ibānah al-Kubrā [423]

grammarians among them said: "Īmān is merely speech without action." So I mentioned that to 'Aṭā', and he said: "Glory be to Allah! Do you not recite the verse in Sūrat al-Baqarah:

"Righteousness is not that you turn your faces toward the east or the west, but righteousness is in one who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the angels, the Book, and the prophets..."

Then he said: "Allah described actions under that name (of righteousness) and attached them to it," as in His saying: "...and gives his wealth, in spite of love for it, to relatives, orphans, the needy, the traveler, those who ask [for help], and for freeing slaves; and who establishes prayer and gives zakah (charity); those who fulfill their promise when they promise; and those who are patient in poverty and hardship and during battle. It is they who have been true, and it is they who are the righteous." (Qur'an 2:177)

He said: "Ask them—did this action enter into the name īmān?" And he said, citing another verse: "And whoever desires the Hereafter and strives for it with the effort due to it while he is a believer—it is those whose effort is ever appreciated." (Qur'an 17:19) Thus, he explained that the name (of īmān) is bound with action, and the action is bound with the name.[676]

An-Nuʿmān ibn Thābit (Abū Ḥanīfah) (d. 150 AH)

The scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah and Hadith criticized him for several reasons, the most notable being his adoption of the doctrine of al-irjāʾ ' and his call to it.

Ibn Ḥibbān said, speaking about the reasons why scholars rejected the narrations of Abū Ḥanīfah: "Among the reasons was his lack of precision in transmission, and his reversal of chains of narration (asānīd); thus, he was deemed unworthy by them. Moreover, it is not permissible to use him as proof because he was a caller to al-irjāʾ '. And a caller to innovation is not accepted as evidence by our Imāms without exception—I know of no difference among them in this. Furthermore, the Imāms of the Muslims and the devout people of religion in every land and region spoke ill of him and criticized him openly..."[677]

Ibn 'Abd al-Barr said: "Many among the scholars of hadith permitted criticism of Abū Ḥanīfah because he rejected many reports from trustworthy individuals (āḥād al-ʿudūl). His method was to examine such reports against what he had gathered from other hadiths and meanings of the Qur'an—if the report contradicted those, he would reject it and label it 'anomalous' (shādh). Moreover, he would also say that acts of obedience, such as prayer and the like, are not

[676] Al-Ibānah al-Kubrā [1342]
[677] Al-Majrūḥīn (3/63)

considered part of īmān (īmān). And all those among Ahl al-Sunnah who held that īmān is composed of speech and action refuted this and deemed it an innovation."[678]

Ibn Taymiyyah said concerning the issue of conditional divorce: "Most of the hadith scholars criticized Abū Ḥanīfah and his companions severely. Their criticism is widespread in the books, to the point that they refrained from transmitting anything from him in the canonical hadith collections. Thus, you will not find him mentioned in the Ṣaḥīḥayn (al-Bukhārī and Muslim) nor the Sunan."[679]

Abū Mus-hir said: "Abū Ḥanīfah was the leader of the Murji'ah."[680]

Yaḥyā ibn Maʿīn said: "Abū Ḥanīfah was a Murji'ī and a caller to it, and he had no standing in hadith."[681]

Abū ʻAbd al-Raḥmān al-Muqri' said: "By Allah, Abū Ḥanīfah was a Murji'ī, and he invited me to irjāʾ ', but I refused."[682]

ʻAbdah said: "I heard Ibn al-Mubārak—when someone mentioned Abū Ḥanīfah—say: A man asked, 'Did he hold any heretical views (hawā)?' He replied: 'Yes, irjāʾ '."'[683]

Wakīʿ said: "When Abū Ḥanīfah began to speak about al-irjāʾ ' and debated over it, Sufyān ath-Thawrī said: 'He ought to be expelled from Kūfah.'"[684]

Isḥāq ibn ʻĪsā said: "We were with Ḥammād ibn Zayd, and with us was Wahb ibn Jarīr, when we mentioned some of Abū Ḥanīfah's sayings. Ḥammād ibn Zayd said: 'Be quiet! One of you will always be mocked even by his own people because he speaks of the innovators in their gatherings, until he falls in their eyes.' Then Ḥammād turned to us and said: 'Do you know what Abū Ḥanīfah was? He used to argue for irjāʾ ', and when he feared for his own life, he began speaking in ra'y; he used analogical reasoning to cancel the Sunnahs of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him). And the Sunnahs of the Messenger of Allah are not to be subjected to analogy.'"[685]

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[678] Al-Intiqā' (p. 149)
[679] Ar-Radd ʻalā as-Subkī (2/873)
[680] Tārīkh Baghdād, 15/512
[681] As-Sunnah by ʻAbd Allāh ibn Aḥmad [383]
[682] As-Sunnah by ʻAbd Allāh [367]
[683] Maʿrifah wa at-Tārīkh by Al-Fasawī, 2/782
[684] As-Sunnah by ʻAbd Allāh [365]
[685] Ḥilyat al-Awliyā', 6/258

Ibrāhīm ibn Shammās as-Samarqandī said: "'Abd Allāh ibn al-Mubārak narrated to us at the frontier from Abū Ḥanīfah. Then a man called Abū Khudāsh stood up and said: 'O Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān, do not narrate to us from Abū Ḥanīfah, for he was a Murji'ī.' Ibn al-Mubārak did not reject this. After that, whenever a narration from Abū Ḥanīfah appeared, Ibn al-Mubārak would strike it out from his books and cease narrating from him. That was the last time he read to the people on the frontier before he returned and died.

He said: I was with him on the boat when he returned from the frontier. He would narrate to us, and when something came up from Abū Ḥanīfah or his opinion, he would say: 'Strike that out—I have turned away from his narrations and views.' And Ibn al-Mubārak died on that return journey. A man once said to Ibn al-Mubārak in our presence: 'Abū Ḥanīfah was a Murji'ī who permitted armed rebellion.' And Ibn al-Mubārak did not deny it."[686]

it is mentioned: We asked 'Abd al-Malik ibn Ḥabīb about the explanation of "al-dā' al-'uḍāl" (the grievous affliction) in the ḥadīth of Mālik, which he narrated from Ka'b, wherein 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb — may Allāh be pleased with him — said when he intended to go to 'Irāq: "Do not go there... for in it is al-dā' al-'uḍāl." 'Abd al-Malik said: "It means ruin in religion. Muṭarrif informed me that they asked Mālik about the meaning of al-dā' al-'uḍāl in this ḥadīth, and he replied: 'It is Abū Ḥanīfah and his companions.'"

He explained that Abū Ḥanīfah led people astray in two ways: by adopting irjā' , and by dismantling the sunan through ra'y. He added: "He is, in our view, the most ominous birth in Islām — many people went astray because of him, and they persist in their misguidance through what he legislated until the Day of Judgment."[687]

The attribution of irjā' to Abū Ḥanīfah is firmly established — none denies it except one ignorant of the condition and beliefs of men. This was affirmed by the Imāms of the Sunnah, as mentioned earlier, and also by many later scholars. Among them:

Ibn Taymiyyah said: "The people of innovation (ahl al-bid'ah) are more common among the non-Ḥanbalīs in many aspects, because the textual statements of Aḥmad regarding the details of the Sunnah and the rejection of innovations are much more numerous than those of others. So the innovators affiliated with other madhāhib — whether they were Jahmiyyah, Qadariyyah, Shī'ah, or Murji'ah — their views were not part of the madhhab of the Imām, except in the case of irjā' , which was the view of Abū Fulān (clearly referring to Abū Ḥanīfah). As for some aspects of tajāhum, reports differed from him, so his followers also differed — some being Sunni

[686] As-Sunnah by 'Abd Allāh [330]
[687] Tafsīr Gharīb al-Muwaṭṭa' (2/26)

and some Jahmī; male and female; anthropomorphists and corporealists — for his foundational principles neither refuted innovations nor affirmed them."[688]

Many copyist tried erase and hide Abū Ḥanīfah name when narrating what the Salaf said, this concealment can be done in some books of sunnah or history, but it cannot be done by all books.

Shaykh Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb said: "The core of the issue is that īmān is divisible. It is not necessary that if part of it goes, all of it goes — that is the view of the Khawārij. The one who says that all actions are part of 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh' — his statement is correct. And the one who says that a person will be taken out of the Fire if he said it, even if he has in his heart an atom's weight of īmān — his statement is also correct. The reason is what I mentioned to you about divisibility. And because of a lack of understanding of this principle, Abū Ḥanīfah and his companions erred in claiming that actions are not part of īmān."[689]

Al-Muʿallimī said: "It is well known from Abū Ḥanīfah that he used to say: 'actions are not part of īmān, and īmān does not increase or decrease.' And al-Khaṭīb narrated from a group of Ahl al-Sunnah their rejection of this statement from Abū Ḥanīfah and their attribution of irjāʾ to him. So al-Kawtharī criticized those reports and attempted to vilify those aʾimmah (leaders), exaggerating and being deceptive as usual. Thus, I was compelled to refute him in defense of the aʾimmah of the Sunnah whom he wrongly attacked."[690]

Misʿar ibn Kidām al-Hilālī al-Kūfī (d. 153 AH)

Abū Nuʿaym said in narration: "We witnessed the funeral of Misʿar ibn Kidām fifty years ago — neither Sufyān nor Sharīk were present."[691]

Muḥammad ibn ʿAmmār said: "I heard Abū Nuʿaym say: I heard Sufyān ath-Thawrī say: 'Īmān increases and decreases.' I asked: 'What do you say, Abū Nuʿaym?' He looked at me with a look of disapproval, then said: 'I say what Sufyān says. Misʿar ibn Kidām died, and he was among the righteous, but Sufyān and Sharīk — both of whom were present — did not attend his funeral.'"

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[688] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (20/186)
[689] ad-Durar as-Saniyyah (2/66)
[690] at-Tankīl (11/555)
[691] al-Lālakāʾī (1655)]

And it was narrated that a man gave testimony before Sharīk seven times, and Sharīk rejected it. So someone asked him about it. He said: "Shall I accept the testimony of one who claims that ṣalāh is not part of īmān?!"[692]

ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd ibn ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān al-Ḥimmanī said: "I said to Misʿar: 'O Abū Salamah, can I say: "I am a believer, truly"?' He replied: 'Yes — you can be a false believer! Would it be correct in speech for someone to say: "This is the sky, inshāʾAllāh"?'"[693]

What is reliably reported from Misʿar is that he opposed Ahl al-Sunnah only on the matter of istithnāʾ (adding "inshāʾAllāh") in statements about īmān. As for actions (aʿmāl), he held that they are part of īmān — but he did not doubt his own īmān.[694]

Abū Dharr ʿUmar ibn Dharr ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Murhabī (d. 156 AH)

In Tārīkh al-Muntajalī: One day ʿUmar was sitting delivering a sermon, and al-Aʿmash was nearby using his siwāk. ʿUmar said to him: "Come here, Abā Muḥammad!" Al-Aʿmash replied: "I am here following the Sunnah, and you are over there in bidʿah."[695]

ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Abī Rawwād al-Azdī al-Makkī (d. 159 AH)

Ibn Ḥibbān said in in his biography of ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz: "He died in the year 159 in Makkah, and ath-Thawrī did not pray over him because he held the view of irjāʾ . He was overtaken by asceticism to the point that he didn't know what he was narrating, and he transmitted from Nāfiʿ things which anyone skilled in ḥadīth would not doubt to be fabricated... Even though he was pious in himself — but how can someone be truly devout when he was so hardened upon irjāʾ , and held intense hatred for those who followed the sunan?"[696]

Khuwayl said: I said to ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Abī Rawwād, "What do you say about īmān?" He said: "It is speech without action." I said: "Our companions don't say this." He replied: "Who are your companions?" I said: "Ayyūb, Ibn ʿAwn, and Yūnus." He said: "Doubters! May Allāh not increase the likes of them among the Muslims."[697]

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[692] ath-Thiqāt of Ibn Ḥibbān (1389)
[693] aṭ-Ṭabaqāt of Ibn Saʿd (6/173)
[694] See: Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā of Ibn Taymiyyah (13/47)
[695] Ikmāl Tahdhīb al-Kamāl (10/49)
[696] al-Majrūḥīn (2/136)
[697] aḍ-Ḍuʿafāʾ of al-ʿUqaylī (3384)

al-Ḥasan ibn Wahb al-Jumaḥī said: ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Abī Rawwād came to us when he was a young man, around twenty-something years old. He remained among us for forty or fifty years without being known for irjāʾ — until his son ʿAbd al-Majīd came up and brought him into irjāʾ. He was the most ominous child ever born in Islām for his father.[698]

Abū ʿĀṣim said: ʿIkrimah ibn ʿAmmār came to ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Abī Rawwād, knocked on his door and said, "Where is this deviant?" — referring to his belief in irjāʾ.[699]

Muʾammal ibn Ismāʿīl said: ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Abī Rawwād died and his body was brought to the gate of aṣ-Ṣafā. The people lined up in rows, and then ath-Thawrī came. People began saying, "ath-Thawrī has come, ath-Thawrī has come." He walked through the rows while people watched, passed by the body, and did not pray over it — because ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz held the view of irjāʾ.[700]

Muʾammal ibn Ismāʿīl said: Sufyān ath-Thawrī did not pray over Ibn Abī Rawwād. It was said to him [i.e., why?]. He replied: "By Allāh, I do pray over people whom I consider less than him — but I wanted to show the people that he died upon a bidʿah."[701]

Abū Bakr ibn ʿAffān as-Sarakhsī said: Ibn ʿUyaynah came out to us from his house — which was at Qāʿiqiʿān — and said: "Beware of Ibn Abī Rawwād the Murjiʾ — do not sit with him."[702]

Ibrāhīm ibn Ṭahmān ibn Shuʿbah al-Harawī (d. 168 AH)

Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal said: "Ibrāhīm ibn Ṭahmān was from Khurāsān, and he was a Murjiʾ who expressed that view."[703]

Nuʿaym ibn Ḥammād said: "I have heard of Ibrāhīm ibn Ṭahmān for over sixty years — it was said that he was a Murjiʾ."[704]

ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Abī ʿUthmān said: A man from the Maghāribah used to sit with Sufyān, and Sufyān would treat him lightly and find comfort in him. Then he distanced himself from him. So the man complained to us. I said to him, "Speak to so-and-so, for he is bolder with Sufyān." So he spoke to him and said, "O Abū ʿAbd Allāh, what happened with this Shaykh from the

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[698] al-Lālakāʾī (1677)
[699] aḍ-Ḍuʿafāʾ of al-ʿUqaylī (3371); al-Lālakāʾī (1648)
[700] aḍ-Ḍuʿafāʾ of al-ʿUqaylī (3364)
[701] aḍ-Ḍuʿafāʾ of al-ʿUqaylī (3365)
[702] aḍ-Ḍuʿafāʾ of al-ʿUqaylī (235)
[703] aḍ-Ḍuʿafāʾ of al-ʿUqaylī (205)
[704] Tārīkh Baghdād (13/7)

Maghāribah? You used to treat him lightly — what is his condition today?" He kept at him until Sufyān said, "He sits with..." — but he didn't name anyone.

He asked him, "Whom do you sit with?" He said, "One day I sat with Ibrāhīm ibn Ṭahmān in al-Masjid al-Ḥarām. Then Sufyān entered through the door of the mosque and looked at me — and I could tell he looked at me with disapproval."[705]

Isḥāq ibn Ibrāhīm said: "If I had known of Ibn Ṭahmān in Marw what I came to know of him in Naysābūr, I would never have deemed it permissible to narrate from him" — meaning, due to his belief in irjāʾ . [Tārīkh Baghdād (15/7)]

al-Ḥusayn ibn al-Walīd said: I met Mālik ibn Anas and asked him about a ḥadīth. He said, "It has been a long time since I heard that ḥadīth. Where did you get it?"
I said: "Ibrāhīm ibn Ṭahmān narrated it from you." He said: "Abū Saʿīd? How did you leave him?" I said: "In good condition." He asked: "Does he still say, 'I am a believer with Allāh'?" I said: "O Abā ʿAbd Allāh, what do you find objectionable in that?" He fell silent and lowered his head for a while, then said: "I never heard the Salaf say that." [Tārīkh Baghdād (15/7)]

ʿAbd aṣ-Ṣamad ibn Ḥassān said: When Abū Ḥanīfah died, Sufyān ath-Thawrī said to me, "Go to Ibrāhīm ibn Ṭahmān and give him glad tidings — the misleader of this ummah has died." So I went to him but found him sleeping, and returned to Sufyān and said, "He is resting." He said, "Go and shout to him: the misleader of this ummah has died." al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī said: ath-Thawrī wanted to upset Ibrāhīm with the death of Abū Ḥanīfah, because he was upon his madhhab regarding irjāʾ . [Tārīkh Baghdād (15/586)]

Abū Yūsuf Yaʿqūb ibn Ibrāhīm, the judge of Kūfa (d. 182 AH)

Mūsā ibn ʿImrān — who used to write from Sharīk — said: Sharīk sought permission to enter upon al-Mahdī, and Abū Yūsuf the judge was with him, and they were disputing. Al-Mahdī said: "Prayer is part of īmān (īmān)," and Abū Yūsuf said: "Prayer is not part of īmān." Then Sharīk asked to enter, and al-Mahdī said: "Here comes the one who will settle the matter between us." When he entered, he gave greetings, and they returned the greeting. Then he was asked: "O Abū ʿAbd Allāh, what do you say about two men disputing — one says prayer is part of īmān, and the other says prayer is an action (ʿamal)?" He replied: "The one who said prayer is part of īmān is correct, and the one who said it is merely an action is mistaken."

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[705] aḍ-Ḍuʿafāʾ of al-ʿUqaylī (204)

Abū Yūsuf asked: “On what basis did you say that?” He said: “Abū Isḥāq narrated to me from al-Barāʾ ibn ʿĀzib regarding the saying of Allāh the Exalted: ‘And Allāh would never cause your īmān to be lost.’ [al-Baqarah 2:143] He said: ‘Your prayer toward Bayt al-Maqdis (Jerusalem).’” Then he (Sharīk) silenced him with this.”[706]

ʿAbd Allāh ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal said: I asked my father about Abū Yūsuf. He said: “He is truthful (ṣadūq), but he is one of the companions of Abū Ḥanīfah. It is not proper to narrate from him.”[707]

Yaḥyā ibn Ādam al-Nakhkhāl said: Abū Yūsuf testified before Sharīk. Sharīk said to him: “Stand up.” And he refused to accept his testimony. Someone asked him: “You reject his testimony?!” He said: “Shall I accept the testimony of a man who says that prayer is not part of īmān?!”[708]

Abū al-Walīd al-Ṭayālisī said: When Abū Yūsuf came to al-Ray, I went to him and gave him greetings. Then ʿUthmān ibn Zāʾidah met me and said: “Perhaps you went to that man and greeted him?” I said: “Yes.” He said: “What a terrible thing you did.” And my eyes never saw anyone better than ʿUthmān ibn Zāʾidah.”[709]

ʿAlī ibn Ḥujr said: One day we were with Sharīk, and he said: “Whoever is mentioned here from the companions of Yaʿqūb — remove him.”[710]

Zakariyyā al-Sājī said: Yaʿqūb ibn Ibrāhīm, Abū Yūsuf, the companion of Abū Ḥanīfah, is blameworthy (madhmūm), a murjiʾ.[711]

Abū Ḥafṣ ʿAmr ibn ʿAlī said: I heard Yaḥyā al-Qaṭṭān, and a neighbor said to him: “Abū Yūsuf narrated to us from Abū Ḥanīfah from Jawāb al-Taymī.” He replied: “A murjiʾ from a murjiʾ from a murjiʾ.”[712]

Nuʿaym ibn Ḥammād said: I heard Ibn al-Mubārak, and they mentioned Abū Yūsuf in his presence. He said: “Do not corrupt our gathering by mentioning Abū Yūsuf.”[713]

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[706] al-Lālakāʾī (1381)
[707] al-Jarḥ wa-al-Taʿdīl (9/201)
[708] al-Sunnah by al-Khallāl no. 1024, and al-Ḍuʿafāʾ by al-ʿUqaylī (6/424)
[709] al-Thiqāt by Ibn Ḥibbān (9/138)
[710] al-Ḍuʿafāʾ by al-ʿUqaylī (6751)
[711] Taʾrīkh Baghdād (16/372)
[712] Taʾrīkh Baghdād (14/258)
[713] Taʾrīkh Baghdād (16/372)

Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Shaybānī, the Kūfan jurist (d. 189 AH)

Yaḥyā ibn Ādam said: Sharīk would not accept the testimony of the Murji'ah . He said: So Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan testified before him, and he did not accept his testimony. It was said to him, "This is Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan!" He said: "Shall I accept the testimony of someone who says that prayer (ṣalāh) is not part of īmān (īmān)?!"[714]

Abū Muʿāwiyah Muḥammad ibn Khāzim al-Ḍarīr al-Kūfī (d. 194 AH)

Abū Dāwūd said: He was the head of the Murji'ah in Kūfa.

Yaʿqūb ibn Shaybah said: He was trustworthy (thiqah), though sometimes he practiced tadlīs, and he used to hold the view of irjā' . It is said that Wakīʿ did not attend his funeral for that reason. Ibn Ḥibbān said: He was a ḥāfiẓ, precise, but a wicked murji'.[715]

Ibn ʿAmmār said: Bishr al-Ḥāfī, whenever he came to Ḥafṣ ibn Ghiyāth or to Abū Muʿāwiyah, would sit apart and not listen to them. I said to him, "Why?" He replied: "Ḥafṣ is a judge, and Abū Muʿāwiyah is a murji' who calls to irjā' . I have no dealings with either of them."[716]

ʿAbd al-Majīd ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Abī Rawwād al-Azdī (d. 206 AH)

Abū Dāwūd said about ʿAbd al-Majīd ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Abī Rawwād: "He was a murji' and a caller to irjā' . And ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz was not corrupted until his son ʿAbd al-Majīd grew up. The people of Khurāsān do not narrate from him."[717]

Abū Dāwūd also said: "'Abd al-Majīd was a leader in irjā' ." Yaʿqūb ibn Sufyān said: "He was an innovator and a caller to innovation." Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal said: "'Abd al-Majīd ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Abī Rawwād – there is no harm in him but he had extremism in irjā' , and he used to say: 'These people are doubters.'"[718]

Salamah ibn Shabīb said: I was with ʿAbd al-Razzāq, and news came to us of the death of ʿAbd al-Majīd – and that was in the year 206 AH – so he said: "Praise be to Allah who relieved the Ummah of Muḥammad from ʿAbd al-Majīd."[719]

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[714] al-Kāmil fī al-Ḍuʿafā' by Ibn ʿAdī (7/378)
[715] al-Siyar (9/76)
[716] Ta'rīkh Baghdād (9/68), al-Siyar (9/62)
[717] Tahdhīb al-Kamāl (18/274)
[718] al-Kāmil by Ibn ʿAdī (7/47)
[719] al-Siyar (9/436)

Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Muqriʾ said: ʿAbd al-Majīd used to say: "I do not narrate to anyone who attends those doubters" – referring to Sufyān ibn ʿUyaynah and Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Muqriʾ.[720]

Shabābah ibn Sawwār al-Fazārī, their mawlā, from al-Madāʾin (d. 206 AH)

Ibn Hāniʾ said: I asked Abū ʿAbd Allāh (i.e., Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal), "What do you say about Shabābah?" He said: "Shabābah used to call to irjāʾ . And it has been reported from him as a statement worse than these other sayings, something I've never heard from anyone else." He said: "Shabābah said: 'If one says (something), then he has acted.' He said: 'Īmān is qawl and ʿamal as you say; so when he says (it), he has acted with his limb – that is, with his tongue when he speaks it.'" Abū ʿAbd Allāh said: "This is a wicked statement, I've never heard anyone say this nor has it reached me." I said to him: "How did you write from Shabābah?" He said: "Yes, I had written a small amount from him long ago, before we knew that he said this."[721]

Abū Bakr al-Athram said: I heard Abū ʿAbd Allāh (Aḥmad) being asked, "What do you say about Shabābah?" He replied: "Shabābah used to call to irjāʾ . And a statement has been reported from him worse than these other sayings, something I've never heard from anyone else." He said: "Shabābah said: 'If one says, he has acted. Īmān is qawl and ʿamal as they say; so if he says it, he has acted with his limb – that is, his tongue.'" Then Abū ʿAbd Allāh said: "This is a wicked statement. I've never heard anyone else say it, nor has it reached me."[722]

A group from the Murjiʾah and the stance of Ahl al-Sunnah toward them

al-Ḥusayn ibn al-Ḥasan ibn al-Waḍḍāḥ said: I heard Yaḥyā ibn Jaʿfar al-Baykandī say: I used to be a Murjiʾī, then I set out for ḥajj and entered al-Kūfah. I asked Wakīʿ ibn al-Jarrāḥ about īmān, and he said: īmān is qawl and ʿamal. So I did not consider it permissible to write from him. Then I entered Makkah and asked Sufyān ibn ʿUyaynah about īmān, and he said: īmān is qawl and ʿamal, so I did not consider it permissible to write from him. Then I entered Yemen and sat in the gathering of ʿAbd al-Razzāq. I didn't ask him [about īmān], but he was informed of my doctrine. When my companions sat down, he said to me: O Khurāsānī, by Allāh, if I had known that you held this belief, I would not have narrated to you. Get out from me! I said to myself: ʿAbd al-Razzāq spoke the truth. I met Wakīʿ ibn al-Jarrāḥ, and he said: īmān is qawl and ʿamal. I

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[720] al-Ḍuʿafāʾ by al-ʿUqaylī (2095)
[721] al-Ḍuʿafāʾ by al-ʿUqaylī (2567)
[722] al-Sunnah by al-Khallāl (969)

met Sufyān ibn ʿUyaynah, and he said: īmān is qawl and ʿamal. So I retracted from my doctrine and then wrote from both of them after returning from Yemen.[723]

From Maḥal ibn Maḥraz al-Ḍabbī al-Ḍarīr, he said: There was a man who used to sit with Ibrāhīm, and he was called Muḥammad. News reached Ibrāhīm that he spoke about al-irjāʾ , so Ibrāhīm said to him: Do not sit with us.[724]

Maḥal ibn Maḥraz said: I entered upon Ibrāhīm—meaning al-Nakhaʿī—along with Mughīrah, and with us was a Murjiʾī man. We mentioned some of their sayings. So he said: Do not speak to them and do not sit with them. He said: I want to know that when you rise from me, do not return to me.[725]

Ḥarmalah ibn Yaḥyā said: Ḥafṣ al-Fard and Miṣlāq al-Ibāḍī gathered in the house of al-Jarawī with al-Shāfiʿī—meaning, in Egypt. They disputed about īmān. Miṣlāq argued for increase and decrease [of īmān], while Ḥafṣ al-Fard argued that īmān is merely qawl. Ḥafṣ al-Fard gained the upper hand over Miṣlāq and overpowered him, and Miṣlāq became weakened. So al-Shāfiʿī became stirred, took up the issue himself, and held firmly that īmān is qawl and ʿamal, and that it increases and decreases. So he ground down Ḥafṣ al-Fard and refuted him completely.[726]

Abū Bakr al-Marrūdhī said to him: Abū ʿAbd Allāh Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal told me about Ibn Abī Razmah al-Murūzī: "It reached me that they asked him in Makkah about īmān, and he refused to say, 'īmān is speech and action.' If I had known this about him, I would not have allowed him to enter upon me." He said to me a few days later: "What is the condition of Ibn Abī Razmah?" I replied: "I do not know much about him." He then said: "I do not wish for anyone from my side to go to him." So, I did not go to him.[727]

Ḥanbal said: I asked Abū ʿAbd Allāh: "A man married his daughter to a man without knowing, but it turns out that this man holds a vile view of al-irjāʾ ." He replied: "If he is extreme in this view and calls others to it, I would advise him to divorce his daughter and not remain with him." I asked: "Would the father be in a difficult situation if he did so?" He said: "I hope he would not be troubled, if he knows this about him and has clarified the matter."[728]

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[723] Tārīkh Dimashq (36/185)
[724] al-Ṭabaqāt by Ibn Saʿd (205)
[725] al-Maʿrifah wa al-Tārīkh (2/606)
[726] Manāqib al-Shāfiʿī by Ibn Abī Ḥātim (p. 147)
[727] Al-Sunnah by al-Khallāl (1088)
[728] Al-Sunnah by al-Khallāl (1138)

Abū Naʿīm said: Sharik looked at a man called Zakarīyā ibn Yahyā and said to him: "Aren't you the one who says: 'Prayer is not part of īmān at all'? Go back, you will not testify for me."[729]

Ibn al-Sarmarī said: The reader was asked: "There is a man in Bukhārā called Aḥmad ibn Ḥafṣ, who says: 'īmān is speech.' What do you think?" He replied: "He is a Murji'ī, and I was in front of him, so I said: 'I also say that.' He grabbed my head and bumped me with his forehead and said: 'You, a Murji'ī, O Khurāsānī?!'"[730]

Maʿn ibn ʿĪsā said: Mālik ibn Anas once left the mosque leaning on my arm. A man known as Abū al-Juwayriyya, who was accused of irjā' , followed him and said, "O Abū ʿAbd Allāh, listen to something from me. Let me speak to you and argue my case, and inform you of my view." Mālik said, "And if you defeat me?" He replied, "If I defeat you, you follow me." Mālik asked, "And if another man comes and speaks to both of us and defeats us?" He replied, "Then we follow him." Mālik said: "O servant of Allāh! Allāh sent Muḥammad with one religion, and I see that you jump from one religion to another." Then he said, "'Umar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz said: 'Whoever makes his religion a target for disputes will often change his religion.'"[731]

Maʿn ibn ʿĪsā also reported that a man in Madīnah named Abū al-Juwayriyya held the view of irjā' , and Mālik ibn Anas said: "Do not marry him."[732]

Al-Khalīlī said: Ibrāhīm ibn Yūsuf al-Balkhī, a leader and shaykh of his region, had a story: He entered upon Mālik ibn Anas, and Qutaybah ibn Saʿīd al-Balkhī stood up and said: "This man holds the view of the Iraqis in irjā' ." Mālik ordered that he be taken out by the hand.[733]

Al-Bukhārī said: I saw a group enter upon Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Firyābī. It was said to him: "O Abū ʿAbd Allāh, these people are Murji'ah ." He said: "Expel them." So they repented and returned (from their belief).[734]

From Ghālib Abū al-Hudhayl: He was with Ibrāhīm when a group from the Murji'ah entered. They spoke, and he became angry and said: "If this is your speech, do not come in to me again."[735]

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[729] Akhbār al-Qudā' (3/162)
[730] Siyar (13/36)
[731] Al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (609)
[732] al-Lālikā'ī (1656)
[733] Al-Irshād (1/277)
[734] Tahdhīb al-Kamāl (27/58)
[735] Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā (6/274)

ʿAbd Allāh ibn Aḥmad said: ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd al-Ḥimmanī Abū Yaḥyā was a staunch Murjiʾī, extreme in irjāʾ , and a caller to it. The shaykh—meaning Imām Aḥmad—used to criticize him.[736]

Isḥāq ibn Manṣūr al-Kawsaj said: Yaḥyā ibn Ṣāliḥ narrated to us. He was a filthy Murjiʾī, a caller to their doctrine, not suitable to be narrated from.[737]

Muḥammad ibn Saʿd said: Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Asadī died in the year 153 AH during the caliphate of Abū Jaʿfar. He was a Murjiʾī. He died, and neither Sufyān al-Thawrī nor al-Ḥasan ibn Ṣāliḥ ibn Ḥayy attended his funeral. He was trustworthy, if Allāh wills, and narrated much ḥadīth.[738]

Al-Khalīlī said: Abū Muṭīʿ al-Ḥakam ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Balkhī (d. 208 AH) was criticized for irjāʾ , and they called him "the Murjiʾī." He took knowledge from Abū Ḥanīfah, and heard from Shuʿbah, Mālik, and others. He held the position of judge in Balkh and held a high station among the Ḥanafīs. However, the ḥuffāẓ (masters of ḥadīth) of Iraq and Khurāsān did not accept him.[739]

Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad said: I heard Abū ʿAbd Allāh (Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal) mention ʿĪsā ibn Muslim al-Aḥmar and his statement in irjāʾ , and he said: "Yes, that is filthy speech," and he spoke harshly against him.[740]

ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī said: I heard my father say: "Al-Ṣalt ibn Bahrām was trustworthy, but his only flaw was irjāʾ."[741]

Aḥmad said: Muḥammad ibn Abān ibn Ṣāliḥ ibn ʿUmayr al-Juʿfī al-Kūfī used to promote irjāʾ , so the people abandoned his narrations.[742]

Abū Nuʿaym said: I heard Sufyān say: I passed through Jurjān where Jawāb al-Taymī was, and I did not approach him. Abū Nuʿaym said: That was because of irjāʾ.[743]

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[736] Al-Sunnah (265)
[737] Tahdhīb al-Kamāl (31/379)
[738] Al-Ṭabaqāt (6/362) and Tahdhīb al-Kamāl (21/339)
[739] Al-Irshād (3/925)
[740] Al-Ḍuʿafāʾ by al-ʿUqaylī (4715)
[741] Al-Jarḥ wa al-Taʿdīl (4/438)
[742] Al-Ḍuʿafāʾ wa al-Matrūkūn by Ibn al-Jawzī (2862)
[743] Al-Kāmil fī al-Ḍuʿafāʾ by Ibn ʿAdī (2/438)

Yaḥyā ibn Maʿīn said in his narration by al-Dūrī: "There was nothing wrong with al-Ṭāṭarī, except that he was a Murjiʾī." He said: "In Damascus, anyone who was a Murjiʾī wore a turban, and whoever was not did not wear one."[744]

it is religiously and rationally impossible that Allāh would make these Imāms of the religion a proof between Him and His creation, establish consensus upon them, and then that what they stated concerning the Murji'ah and their corrupt doctrines would not be the truth and the straight path.

Therefore, whoever opposes them—by affirming positions contrary to theirs, or by seeking to minimize criticism of the Murji'ah and their ideologies, arguing that some of those who held such views had knowledge, piety, or devotion—intending thereby to affiliate them with Ahl al-Sunnah and include them among its people—has committed a grave injustice against the Sunnah and its followers, and has made a serious and repugnant error. For such a stance undermines all the aforementioned statements of the Imāms of the Sunnah in condemning irjāʾ, warning against its adherents, abandoning them, and refusing to transmit their narrations.

[744] Tārīkh Ibn Maʿīn as narrated by al-Dūrī (5285)

Position of the Murji'ah towards the Sunnah and its people

ʿAnbasah ibn Saʿīd al-Kilāʿī said in transmission: "No man innovated an innovation except that his chest became constricted toward the Muslims, and trustworthiness was shaken from him." Nuʿaym ibn Gharīb said: Al-Awzāʿī heard this from me and said: "Did you hear it from ʿAnbasah?" I said, "Yes." He said: "He has spoken the truth. Inaction, we used to say: "No man innovated an innovation except that his piety was taken away from him."[745]

The Imāms spoke with knowledge and wisdom. Whoever follows the saying of people of innovation will see clearly and recognise the insight of Ahl As-Sunnah in what they said.

Here are some sayings of the Murji'ah regarding the Sunnah and its Imām's so the reality of their doctrine and misguidance is clear. The dispute between them was not mere verbal but rather a real dispute with enmity and hatred.

Ibn Ḥibbān said, in the biography of ʿAbd al-Majīd ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Abī Rawwād: He was one of the propagators of irjāʾ, and he is the one who narrated: From Ibn Jurayj, from ʿAṭāʾ, from Ibn ʿAbbās, who said: "The Qadariyyah are disbelievers, the Shīʿah are doomed, the Ḥarūriyyah are innovators, and we know the truth only with the Murji'ah ."[746]

Ibn Ḥibbān commented: This report was narrated from him by ʿIṣām ibn Yūsuf al-Balkhī, and this is fabricated. Neither did Ibn ʿAbbās say this, nor did ʿAṭāʾ narrate it, nor did Ibn Jurayj transmit it.

Ibn Ḥibbān also said: Al-Ḥakam ibn ʿAbd Allāh Abū Muṭīʿ al-Balkhī—he was one of the leaders of the Murji'ah , who hated the sunan and its adherents. He is the one who narrated from Ḥammād ibn Salamah, from Abū al-Muhazzam, from Abū Hurayrah that: "The delegation of Thaqīf came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked him about īmān, whether it increases or decreases. He said: 'No. Its increase is disbelief, and its decrease is shirk.'" This is fabricated.[747]

Imām Muslim said: As for the narration of Abū Sinān from ʿAlqamah in the wording of this ḥadīth, wherein it says: "Jibrīl said: I came to ask you about the laws of Islam"—this is an odd addition. It is not part of the actual text. This phrase was inserted into the narration of this ḥadīth by a group who added to the wording, such as Ḍarb al-Nuʿmān ibn Thābit (Abū Ḥanīfah), Saʿīd ibn Sinān, and those who followed their way in irjāʾ. They did this to validate

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[745] Dhamm al-Kalām (933)
[746] Al-Majrūḥīn (784)
[747] Al-Majrūḥīn (236)

their view about īmān and to promote irjāʾ. But this only increased their words in weakness and in distance from the truth, especially when they added to the narrations things that the people of knowledge find sufficient reason for rejection.

As for the narration from Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī, in which he said: I heard the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ say: "Whoever claims that īmān increases and decreases—its increase is hypocrisy, and its decrease is disbelief. If they do not repent, then strike their necks with the sword. They are enemies of the Most Merciful. They have departed from the religion of Allāh, embraced disbelief, and dared to speak about Allāh. May Allāh purify the earth of them. Know that they have no prayer, no fasting, no zakāh, no ḥajj, no righteousness. They are disassociated from the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, and the Messenger of Allāh is disassociated from them."[748]

Abū al-Muʿīn al-Nasafī al-Ḥanafī, while discussing the narrator of the ḥadīth regarding the branches of īmān being "sixty-some or seventy-some", said: "The narrator has testified to his own heedlessness, as he doubted and said: 'Sixty-some or seventy-some.' And it is not conceivable that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ would be uncertain in such a matter. Therefore, this ḥadīth contradicts the Book (i.e. the Qurʾān)."[749]

Al-Shaʿbī said: Zubayd narrated to us: When the Murji'ah emerged, I went to Abū Wāʾil and he narrated to me from the Prophet ﷺ: "Abusing a Muslim is fuqūq (deviance), and fighting him is kufr (disbelief)." Al-Shaʿbī said: Mansūr and Sulaymān both narrated to me that they heard Abū Wāʾil narrating from ʿAbd Allāh from the Prophet. Al-Shaʿbī said: I mentioned this to Ḥammād, and he would say: "O Shaʿbī, you are from us except—" I said to him: "Do you accuse Zubayd? Do you accuse Mansūr? Do you accuse al-Aʿmash Sulaymān? All of them narrated to me from Abū Wāʾil." He said: "No, but I accuse Abū Wāʾil."[750]

Al-Naḍr ibn Shumayl said: Abū Muṭīʿ al-Balkhī said: "Islām and īmān in the Qurʾān are mentioned in two different ways, but to me they are one and the same." Al-Naḍr said: So I said to him: "Then who do you think made the mistake—you, or the Prophet ﷺ, or Jibrīl, or Allāh, Exalted is He?"[751]

Ḥammād ibn Zayd said: I sat with Abū Ḥanīfah and he mentioned Saʿīd ibn Jubayr and attributed to him irjāʾ, so I said: "O Abū Ḥanīfah, who narrated that to you?" He replied: "Sālim al-Afṭas." I said to him: "Sālim al-Afṭas was a murji', but Ayyūb narrated to me that Saʿīd ibn Jubayr saw me sitting with Ṭalq and said: 'Did I not see you sitting with Ṭalq? Do not sit

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[748] Al-Tamyīz (p. 199)
[749] Sharḥ al-Ṭaḥāwiyyah (p. 324)
[750] al-Lālakāʾī (1668)
[751] al-Majrūḥīn (236)

with him.'" Ḥammād said: Ṭalq used to hold the view of irjāʾ. Then a man asked Abū Ḥanīfah: "What was Ṭalq's view?" Abū Ḥanīfah turned away. Then he asked again, and Abū Ḥanīfah turned away. Then he said: "Woe to you. He used to hold the view of ʿadl (justice)."[752]

Al-Muʿallimī said: What he meant by ʿadl is what he thought to be just—that is, irjāʾ.[753]

Saʿīd ibn Rāshid said: Abū Ḥanīfah sat with Ayyūb, and Abū Ḥanīfah said: "Sālim al-Afṭas narrated to me that Saʿīd ibn Jubayr held the view of irjāʾ." Ayyūb replied: "You have lied."[754]

Al-Ḥasan ibn ʿUbayd Allāh said: I heard Ibrāhīm [al-Nakhaʿī] say to Dharr: "Woe to you, O Dharr! What is this religion you've brought?" Dharr replied: "It is merely an opinion I formed." He said: Then I heard Dharr later say: "Inaction, it is the religion of Allāh by which He sent Nūḥ!" I said: This is a lie against the Prophets of Allāh.[755]

Khalaf ibn Khalīfah said: From Abū Hāshim, he said: "I went to Ḥammād ibn Abī Sulaymān and said to him: 'What is this opinion you have introduced that was not present during the time of Ibrāhīm (meaning: al-Nakhaʿī)?' He replied: 'If Ibrāhīm were alive, he would follow me on it.' (referring to irjāʾ)."[756]

Salam ibn Sālim al-Balkhī (d. 194 AH) said: "I would not be pleased to meet Allāh with the actions of those who passed, and say that īmān is only a statement and an action."[757]

Al-ʿAjlī said: "'Amr ibn Murrāh used to hold the view of irjāʾ, and said: 'I have looked into these opinions and found no group better than the Murji'ah . And I am one of them.'" Sulaimān al-Aʿmash then said to him: "Why do you not call yourself by something other than Islam?" He replied: "I am like this."[758]

Al-Ḥusayn ibn al-Ḥasan ibn al-Wadāḥ said: "I heard Yahyā ibn Jaʿfar al-Baykandī say: 'I used to be a Murji' and went on pilgrimage. When I entered Kūfah, I asked Wakīʿ ibn al-Jarāḥ about īmān, and he said: īmān is both a statement and an action, and I could not bring myself to write from him.' Then I entered Makkah and asked Sufyān ibn ʿUyaynah about īmān, and he too said: īmān is both a statement and an action, and again I could not write from him. Then I went to Yemen and sat in the assembly of ʿAbd al-Razzāq. I did not ask him directly, but when my

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[752] al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh (285)
[753] al-Tankīl (1/281
[754] al-Kāmil by Ibn ʿAdī (1/143)
[755] al-Sunnah by ʿAbd Allāh (674)
[756] Al-Duʿafā' by al-ʿAqīlī (1484)
[757] Al-Sīyar (9/332)
[758] al-Thiqāt (1286)

companions sat, he said to me: ‘O Khurāsānī, if I had known that you held this view, I would not have narrated to you. Leave me.’ I thought to myself: ‘Inaction, Wakīʿ ibn al-Jarāḥ said: īmān is both a statement and an action, and Sufyān ibn ʿUyaynah said the same. I returned from my views and began to write from them after my return from Yemen.’”[759]

Ibn Rajab in his Dhail mentions: “In the biography of ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Wadhāḥ al-Shahhrābānī (d. 672 AH), he wrote a treatise on whether īmān increases and decreases, in response to a question about a person who swore by ṭalāq (divorce) on the negation of this. He ruled that the divorce was valid and elaborated on the issue. This took place during the time of al-Mustaʿṣim. They faced persecution because of this view—Ibn Wadhāḥ and the Hadīth scholar ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Quḥayṭī from Baghdād—because they supported this answer. The scholars expelled Ibn Wadhāḥ from the madrasa he was staying at and banished al-Quḥayṭī from Baghdād.”[760]

In Al-Ḥawādith al-Jāmiʿah (287), the events of the year 647 were documented: “In that year, a person wrote a fatwa about whether īmān increases or decreases. It was presented to several scholars, but they refused to write on it. Ibn Wadhāḥ and ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Quḥayṭī wrote about it and harshly criticized those who claim that īmān neither increases nor decreases. This fatwa was then submitted to a Ḥanbalī jurist, who kept it with him without issuing a fatwa. Eventually, the matter reached the court, and the Ḥanafī scholars felt that it was a criticism of Abū Ḥanīfah. As a result, an order was issued to expel Ibn Wadhāḥ from the al-Mustanṣirīyah madrasa and banish al-Quḥayṭī from Baghdād, sending him to al-Ḥadīthah, where he remained under supervision.”[761]

From Abū al-ʿAriyān from his father, he said: Ḥamād ibn Abī Sulaymān came to al-Baṣra, and we went to him and approached him. I said: “Are you a believer?” He said: “Yes.” I asked: “Truly?” He replied: “Truly.” So I approached him, and I began to rub myself against him. He said: “Are you mad?” I said: “I saw a true believer, and I wanted to rub myself against him.” I then asked him: “What did your teacher Ibrāhīm say?” He said: “That was just a joke like yours.”[762]

Abū Ṣāliḥ said: al-Fazārī had narrated from Ismāʾīl ibn ʿIyāsh, but then he left him. This was because a man sought refuge with Abū Isḥāq al-Fazārī and said: “O Abū Isḥāq, you mentioned Ismāʾīl ibn ʿIyāsh, and Ismāʾīl said: ‘Any man except for him is suspicious.’”[763]

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[759] Tarikh Dimashq (36/185)
[760] Tabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah (4/112)
[761] Quoted from the margin of the Dhail on Tabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah (4/112)
[762] al-Ḍuʿafāʾ li-l-ʿAqīlī (1508)
[763] al-Ḍuʿafāʾ li-l-ʿAqīlī (394)

Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Miqrīʾ said: ʿAbd al-Majīd ibn Abī Ruwwād used to say: "I do not narrate from those who are doubtful, such as Sufyān ibn ʿUyaynah and Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Miqrīʾ."[764]

Khawayl said: I asked ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Abī Ruwwād: "What do you say about īmān?" He said: "It is just a statement without action." I replied: "Our companions do not say this." He asked: "And who are your companions?" I replied: "Ayyūb, Ibn ʿAwn, and Yūnus." He said: "They are doubters, may Allah not increase such people in the Muslim community."[765]

Wakīʿ narrated from Khalf who said: I heard al-Thawrī say: "We are the believers, and the people of the Qibla are believers to us in marriage, inheritance, prayer, and testimony. We have sins, and we do not know our status with Allah." Then Wakīʿ said: Abū Ḥanīfa said: "Whoever agrees with Sufyān's statement is a doubter to us. We are the believers here, and with Allah, it is truly so!" Wakīʿ added: "We follow Sufyān's view, but Abū Ḥanīfa's words are a bold statement from us."[766]

Ibn al-Jawzī in al-Muḥtasib said: ʿUmar ibn Ẓarr used to oppose Sufyān al-Thawrī because of the irjāʾ" that Sufyān rejected. ʿUmar would say: "That Baqarī (one who is a cattleman), because he was called al-Thawrī." This was enough of a reproach against ʿUmar.[767]

Ibn Ḥibbān said about Shaddād ibn Ḥakīm al-Balkhī: He was a Murjiʾī (follower of irjāʾ), but his narrations were trustworthy when he reported from the trustworthy narrators. However, I prefer to avoid his narrations due to his partisanship in irjāʾ" and his hatred for those who adhere to the Sunnah or seek it.[768]

Ibn Ḥibbān said about Khalaf ibn Ayūb al-Balkhī: He was an extreme Murjiʾī, and I prefer to avoid his narrations due to his partisanship in irjāʾ" and his hatred for those who profess the Sunnah and his effort to suppress them.[769]

Abū al-Ḥasan ibn Banūyah said: Salm ibn Manṣūr al-Muqriʾ al-Fūradī was a Murjiʾī with extreme views on irjāʾ, and he harmed the Ahl al-Ḥadīth.[770]

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[764] al-Ḍuʿafāʾ li-l-ʿAqīlī (2095)
[765] al-Ḍuʿafāʾ li-l-ʿAqīlī (3384), and al-Thuqāt li-Ibn Ḥibbān (136/2)
[766] Tārīkh Baghdād (371/3).
[767] Tawḍīḥ al-Mushtabih (111/9)
[768] al-Thuqāt (13153)
[769] al-Thuqāt (13151)
[770] al-Mīzān (242).

Ibn al-Ḥammām al-Ḥanafī mentioned in the chapter of Riddah (apostasy), the issues that cause one to be considered an apostate and taken out of the realm of Islam: "The statement that Imān increases and decreases!"[771]

Ibn al-Ḥakīm al-Samarqandī said: It should be known that Imān does not increase or decrease because whoever believes in the increase and decrease of Imān is an innovator. He further said: "No scholar or pious person has said that Imān increases and decreases."[772]

Badr al-Rashīd al-Ḥanafī (768 AH) said:A person who says: "I am a believer, if Allah wills, without interpretation" is a disbeliever."[773]

al-Faḍlī said: "A man should not say 'I am a believer, if Allah wills,' because he is commanded to believe, and the exception contradicts it."

Ibn Najīm al-Ḥanafī said: al-Rustaghfānī said: "It is not permissible for those of the Sunnah [referring to the Murji'ah] and the Muʿtazilah to marry one another."[774]

al-Faḍl said: "It is not permissible for one who says: 'I am a believer, if Allah wills' (referring to the Sunnah) because they are disbelievers. This also prohibits the marriage of a Shāfiʿī (and there is disagreement on this: some say it is permissible, while others say one can marry their daughter but not marry them). The al-Bazzāzīyah (jurisprudential text) explains this by saying that they should be treated like the People of the Book."[775]

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[771] al-Baḥr al-Rā'iq (131/5)
[772] al-Sawād al-Aʿẓam (p. 33).
[773] Al-Fuḍh al-Kufr (p. 51)
[774] al-Baḥr al-Rā'iq (110/3)
[775] Ittihāf al-Sādah al-Muttaqīn (278/2)

The Issue of ‘Udhr bil Jahl

The most evilest of things pushed by the Murji’ah of our time is the issue of ‘Udhr bil Jahl, we will not be discussing unclear matters as they require proof to be established for one to declare them out of the fold of islam, but only the clear (such as calling to other then Allah, worshipping the grave, prostrating to idols, and similar acts of worship which is solely for Allah) that is known by necessity. The ulema of our time have time again refuted this issue where the murji'ah do not distinguish between clear and unclear matter. Due to them removing actions (and speech as well) from īmān this has lead to them considering those who do blatant actions such as prostrating to idols, doing tawaf around the grave, insulting the Prophet ﷺ and Allah, doing Sihr and other acts of evil which Allah has explicitly declared takfir upon the individual who take part in these actions without excuse.

We will use what the Scholars have said regarding this.

Shaykh ʿAbdullāh ʾAbā Buṭayn (رحمه الله) stated: "The Almighty (Allāh) said: «And when it was said: 'Indeed, the promise of Allāh is true and the Hour [is coming] - no doubt about it,' you said: 'We do not know what is the Hour. We assume only assumption, and we are not convinced.'» [al-Jāthīyah: 32], and Allāh (تعالى) said regarding the Christians: «They have taken their rabbis and monks as lords besides Allāh, and [also] the Messiah, the son of Maryam» [al-Tawbah: 31].

ʿAdī ibn Ḥātim said to the Prophet (ﷺ): 'We did not worship them.' He said: 'Do they not permit what Allāh has forbidden, so you permitted it? And forbid what Allāh has permitted, so you forbade it?' He said: 'Yes.' The Prophet (ﷺ) said: 'That is their worship.' Therefore, Allāh (سبحانه) condemned them and called them Mushrikīn, even though they did not know that their actions that they were doing were acts of worship, so they were not excused for ignorance."[776]

Abdullāh Aba Butayn al-Najdi (رحمه الله) stated: "If the perpetrator of Shirk Akbar is excused by ignorance (Jahl), then who is not excused?!"[777]

The Shaykh here is making a rhetorical question, because it is absurd for the one who commits Shirk to be excused.

Shaykh ʿAbdur-Raḥmān ibn Ḥasan Āl ash-Shaykh (رحمه الله) said: "May Allāh (تعالى) have mercy upon the ʿUlamāʾ (scholars) who followed the Manhaj of righteousness, and mentioned the

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[776] Ad-Durar as-Sanīyyah, Vol. 10, Pg. 393
[777] Ad-Durar as-Saniyyah, Vol. 12, Pg. 69

chapter on the rulings of the apostate, and none of them said that if one utters a statement of Kufr, or performs an act of Kufr, and he does not know that it contradicts the Shahādatayn, [that he] will not be made Takfīr of due to his ignorance."[778]

Here the Shaykh says that the Manhaj of the righteous was to not excuse the person who commits an act of Kufr or Shirk is not excused with Ignorance.

Imām ibn al-Qayyim also stated: "Know, that if the goodness of Tawḥīd and the vilification of Shirk is not known by the ʿAql and ingrained innately, then there is no assurance of anything to be included within the matters known by the ʿAql. Indeed, this is from the most apparent of matters and the clearest of what Allāh has built within the intellects and innate natures."[779]

Imām ash-Shawkānī (رحمه الله) said: "Whoever falls into Shirk ignorantly is not excused because the Ḥujjah has been established upon all of creation by the coming of Muḥammad (ﷺ). Therefore, whoever is ignorant, then indeed it came from himself due to turning away from the Book [of Allāh] and the Sunnah..."[780]

Imām ibn al-Qayyim said: "Islām is the Tawḥīd of Allāh and His worship alone without any partners, and Īmān (belief) in Allāh and His Messenger, and following him in what he brought. So if the servant does not come with this, then he is not a Muslim, and if he is not a stubborn Kāfir, then he is a Jāhil (ignorant) Kāfir."[781]

Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymīyyah said: "Verily, Allāh separated between what is before the Message and what comes after it in regards to Asmāʾ (labels) and ʾAḥkām (rulings), and also gathered them together. Thus, the label 'Mushrik' is established before the Message (Ḥujjah) due to him performing Shirk with his Lord and setting up with Him another Ilāh and rival before the Messenger. So these Asmāʾ (labels) are established [before the Message]. Likewise, the label of Jahl (ignorance) and Jāhilīyyah, and it is said 'Jāhilīyyah' and 'Jāhil' before the coming of the Messenger. As for punishment [for the ignorant mushrik], then, no."[782]

Shaykh ʿAbdul-Laṭīf ibn ʿAbdur-Raḥmān an-Najdī said: "These two Shaykhs (i.e. Ibn Taymīyyah رحمه الله and Ibn al-Qayyim رحمه الله) declare that whoever does an action which is Kufr or apostasy, he is to be ruled with accordingly, and in accordance to whatever he did from Kufr, Shirk or Fisq, unless there happens to be a preventative factor preventing one from

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[778] Ad-Durar as-Sanīyyah, Vol. 11, Pg. 479
[779] Madārij as-Sālikīn, Vol. 3, Pg. 455
[780] al-Fatḥ ar-Rabbānī, 1/146
[781] Ṭariq al-Hijartayn, Pg. 897-898
[782] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwa, 20/24]

declaring such ruling.This is only applicable to certain cases and does not apply to the one who worships an idol, a grave, a man or a city, because the proofs have already become manifest due to the proofs established by the messengers."[783]

Aba Butayn [رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ] says commenting on Ibn Taymiyyah's words: "As for your claim that the Shaykh (i.e. Ibn Taymiyyah) believes that whoever does anything from these acts of Shirk is not to be declared a Mushrik and a Kāfir until proofs are established against him, then he did not say that with respect to major Shirk, worshipping other than Allāh, and other such acts of Kufr. He only said it with respect to unclear matters as we have already shown from his words: 'This is only true with regards to unclear matters...'"[784]

Shaykh al-Mujaddid Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb said in a story on apostasy: "And of them, were those who affirmed two testimonies, but at the same time admitted that Musaylimah is the Prophet, because Musaylimah brought false witnesses (who were Muslims before and saw the Prophet ﷺ) who testified about it (that the Prophet ﷺ spoke about his prophethood), and many people believed in it. And along with this, there is no disagreement among the scholars that they are apostates even if they were Jahil (ignorant), and he who doubts their apostasy is a Kafir!"[785]

These people only became apostates due to their ignorance and making Taqleed of 2 people who met the Prophet ﷺ, and yet those who excused them due to their ignorance is a Kafir.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah said: "Similarly, his statement that if the polytheists were to abandon the worship of idols, they would still remain ignorant of the truth to the extent of what they had abandoned, is among the types of disbelief (kufr) that are universally and necessarily known to be false by all religious communities.

The people of all religions (meaning the Christian , Jews and Muslims) agree [by Ijmā] that all the messengers prohibited the worship of idols and declared those who practice it to be disbelievers. A believer is not considered truly faithful until he renounces the worship of idols and everything worshiped besides Allah. As Allah, the Exalted, says: 'You already have an excellent example in Abraham and those with him, when they said to their people, "We totally dissociate ourselves from you and ˹shun˺ whatever ˹idols˺ you worship besides Allah. We reject you. The enmity and hatred that has arisen between us and you will last until you believe in Allah alone' [Al-Mumtaḥanah: 4]....

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[783] Fatāwa al-Āʿimmah an-Najdīyyah, 3/300
[784] ad-Durar as-Saniyyah 10/389
[785] Ad-Durar as-Sanīyyah, Vol. 8, Pg. 118]

...This is more apparent and evident among the people of the various religions, such as the Jews and the Christians—let alone the Muslims—than needing to be supported by a specific text.

Whoever says that the idol worshipers, if they abandon them, would still be ignorant of the truth to the extent they have abandoned these idols, is more disbelieving than the Jews and the Christians And whoever does not declare them disbelievers is more disbelieving than the Jews and the Christians, for the Jews and Christians declare the idol worshipers to be disbelievers. How then, can one claim that someone who abandons the worship of idols is ignorant of the truth to the same extent they have abandoned it?

Moreover, it is said: 'The scholar knows whom they worshiped and in which form He appeared for them to worship.' The differentiation and multiplicity in idols is similar to the different members of a visible form, or the different spiritual powers in an invisible form. But to worship anything other than Allah is far worse than the disbelief of idol worshipers. The latter only took idols as intercessors and mediators, as they said: 'We do not worship them except to bring us closer to Allah' (Az-Zumar: 3). Allah, the Exalted, says: 'Or have they taken gods besides Allah? Say: 'What! Even though they have no power over anything and cannot reason?'' (Az-Zumar: 43)."[786]

Shaykh Muḥammad Ibn ʿAbdul-Wahhāb said: "Even the ignorant disbelievers know that what the Prophet ﷺ meant by this phrase was to single out Allah alone in devotion, reject what is worshipped besides Him, and disassociate from it. This is clear because when he said to them: "Say: Lā ilāha illa Allāh," They replied: "Has he made the gods into one God? Indeed, this is something astonishing!" So if you understand that even the ignorant among the disbelievers knew this, then how astonishing is it that someone who claims to be Muslim does not know about this phrase what the ignorant disbelievers knew! Rather, they think that it is merely pronouncing its words without any belief in its meaning. The more knowledgeable among them assume that its meaning is:

"There is no creator, no provider, and no controller of affairs except Allah." So what good is there in a man whom the ignorant disbelievers surpass in understanding the meaning of 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh'? If you have truly understood what I have explained to you with the knowledge of the heart, and if you recognize the shirk (polytheism) that Allah has said He does not forgive: "Indeed, Allah does not forgive that partners be associated with Him." And if you understand the religion of Allah, which He sent with all the messengers from the first to the last—the only religion He accepts from anyone— And if you realize the widespread ignorance about this matter among most people today, then this knowledge grants you two great benefits:

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[786] Majmū al-Fatawā by Ibn Taymiyyah 2/128-129]

the first: Rejoicing in Allah's favor and mercy, as He says: "Say: In the bounty of Allah and in His mercy—in that let them rejoice; it is better than what they accumulate." (Sūrat Yūnus, 58)

the second: A deep sense of fear, for when you understand that a person may fall into disbelief with a single word they utter, even unknowingly—and that ignorance does not excuse them—and they may even say it thinking it brings them closer to Allah, just as the disbelievers mistakenly believed—then your concern for your faith will grow immensely."[787]

Shaykh Muḥammad Ibn ʿAbdul-Wahhāb said: "The story of apostasy after the death of the Prophet ﷺ. Whoever hears it will have no doubt left in his heart regarding the deception of the devils who are called "scholars." They claim: This is polytheism, but they say La Ilaha Illa Allah, and whoever says it cannot be declared a disbeliever for anything. Even worse, they explicitly state that the Bedouins have not retained even a hair of Islam, yet because they say La Ilaha Illa Allah, they are considered Muslims, and their lives and wealth are protected by Islam—despite acknowledging that they have abandoned Islam entirely, denying resurrection, mocking those who affirm it, ridiculing Islam, and preferring the religion of their ancestors over that of the Prophet ﷺ.

Yet, despite all of this, these wicked, ignorant devils insist that the Bedouins are Muslims, even if they commit all these acts, simply because they utter La Ilaha Illa Allah. By their logic, even the Jews would be considered Muslims, since they also say it. Furthermore, the disbelief of these people is far greater than that of the Jews, many times over—I mean the Bedouins described above. What proves this from the story of apostasy is that the apostates differed in their forms of apostasy. Some of them outright denied the Prophet ﷺ, returned to idol worship, and said: He was a prophet but has died. Others held on to the testimony of faith but affirmed the prophethood of Musaylima, believing that the Prophet ﷺ had shared prophethood with him, as Musaylima had false witnesses testify in his favor, deceiving many. Despite this, all scholars unanimously agreed that they were apostates, even if they were ignorant of the truth, and whoever doubts their apostasy is himself a disbeliever.

Thus, scholars agreed that those who denied the Prophet ﷺ, returned to idol worship, and insulted the Messenger of Allah ﷺ are in the same category as those who affirmed the prophethood of Musaylima, even if they remained upon Islam otherwise. Some testified to the faith but believed in Ṭulayḥa's claim to prophethood, others followed al-ʿAnsī, the claimant in Ṣanʿā, and all of them were unanimously considered apostates. Others returned to idol worship after denying the Prophet ﷺ. Among the last of them was al-Fujā'a al-Sulamī, who approached

[787] Kashf ash-Shubuhāt by Muḥammad Ibn ʿAbdul-Wahhāb p.23-25]

Abū Bakr claiming he wanted to fight the apostates and requested supplies. Abū Bakr gave him weapons and mounts, but al-Fujā'a then turned on both Muslims and disbelievers, seizing their wealth. Abū Bakr sent an army against him, and when confronted, al-Fujā'a told the commander: You are Abū Bakr's leader, and I am his leader—I have not disbelieved. The commander replied: If you are truthful, then lay down your weapons. He did so, and Abū Bakr ordered that he be burned alive.

If this was the ruling of the Companions regarding a man who affirmed the five pillars of Islam, then what do you think of those who do not affirm even a single aspect of Islam, except merely uttering La Ilaha Illa Allah with their tongues—while openly denying its meaning and renouncing the religion of Muhammad ﷺ and the Book of Allah? They say: This is the religion of the townsfolk; our religion is the religion of our ancestors. Yet these wicked, ignorant scholars still issue verdicts declaring such people to be Muslims, despite their explicit rejection of Islam, simply because they say La Ilaha Illa Allah! Glory be to You, this is a great falsehood! How true were the words of a Bedouin who, upon hearing some of Islam, declared: I testify that we are disbelievers—meaning himself and all the Bedouins—and I testify that the religious scholar who calls us Muslims is himself a disbeliever."[788]

Shaykh Muḥammad Ibn ʿAbdul-Wahhāb said: "So, if you understand this and grasp it fully, know that this is the path of the messengers, those who followed in their footsteps from among their family, companions, and successors, as well as the rightly guided scholars who came after them. The proof of God is the Qur'an, and whoever the Qur'an reaches has no excuse. Not every form of ignorance is an excuse for its possessor.

These ignorant followers of the disbelievers are considered disbelievers by the consensus of the Ummah—except for those who are truly incapable of reaching the truth and knowing it, those who have no means to do so under any circumstance, despite their love for the truth, their desire for it, their seeking of it, and the absence of anyone to guide them. Also exempt are those who are new to Islam or those who grew up in a remote desert. These are the ones whom the scholars have mentioned as excused, for the proof has not been established against them. Thus, an individual is not declared a disbeliever until they are made aware and the proof is established against them with clarification.

As for the deception and misleading arguments of some who claim that Shaykh al-Islām refrained from declaring an ignorant individual a disbeliever, this is mere obfuscation meant to deceive those with weak insight. His stance was only in specific matters whose evidences might

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[788] Majmūʿat Rasāʾil fī at-Tawḥīd wal-Īmān (printed within the collected works of ash-Shaykh Muḥammad Ibn ʿAbdul-Wahhāb) 1/360-362

be obscure to some people, such as issues related to divine decree (qadar), irjāʾ (postponing judgment on sinners), and similar topics introduced by the people of desires (ahl al-ahwāʾ). Some of their statements contain elements of disbelief because they reject clear and recurrent proofs from the Qur'an and Sunnah. Thus, the statement itself may be disbelief, but the one who utters it is not necessarily judged a disbeliever due to potential barriers, such as ignorance or unawareness of the scriptural text or its meaning. Religious obligations are only binding once they have been conveyed, which is why he mentioned this in his discussion on the innovations of the people of desires.

Shaykh al-Islām (Ibn Taymiyyah) explicitly clarified this when he spoke about the excommunication (takfīr) of certain prominent theologians. After establishing this principle, he said:

"If the matter pertains to obscure issues (masāʾil khafiyyah), one might say that there is no takfīr. However, regarding clear and evident issues or those necessarily known in the religion (maʿlūm min al-dīn bil-ḍarūrah), there is no hesitation in declaring the speaker a disbeliever."

These fools, however, have generalized the issue and treated all ignorance as an excuse without distinction. They equated clear and evident matters—those known as essential parts of the religion—with obscure issues whose proofs may be hidden from some people. Likewise, they compared those living among Muslims with those raised in a remote desert or newly converted to Islam. As a result, they deviated and led many others astray, veering away from the straight path."[789]

Ibn Taymiyyah said: "Those who follow the views of Jahm and al-Ṣāliḥī have explicitly stated that reviling Allah and His Messenger, speaking the doctrine of the Trinity, and uttering any statement of disbelief are not, in themselves, kufr (disbelief) in the inward sense. Rather, they claim these acts are merely external indicators of disbelief. According to them, it is possible for someone who insults and curses (Allah and His Messenger) to still be, inwardly, a believer who knows Allah, affirms His Oneness, and has faith in Him. But when they are confronted with explicit scriptural evidence or consensus that such a person is a disbeliever both inwardly and outwardly, they respond: 'This only means that such actions necessarily imply inward denial (takdhīb), and that faith necessarily negates such actions.'"

He continues: "It is said to them: We possess two undeniable facts:
First: A fact known with absolute certainty from the religion itself.

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[789] Ijmāʿ Ahl as-Sunnah an-Nabawiyyah ʿalā Takfīr al-Muʿaṭṭilah al-Jahmiyyah p.116-117

Second: A fact known with absolute certainty from our own reasoning when we reflect upon it."

As for the first: "We know that whoever reviles Allah and His Messenger willingly and without coercion, or speaks words of disbelief voluntarily, or mocks Allah, His signs, or His Messenger—such a person is a disbeliever both inwardly and outwardly.
Whoever claims that such a person could still, in their heart, be a believer in Allah while merely being outwardly a disbeliever, has stated something whose falsehood is necessarily known from the religion itself. Allah has mentioned the statements of the disbelievers in the Qur'ān, ruling them as disbelievers and declaring that they deserve punishment because of their words.

If their words of disbelief were merely akin to witness testimonies against them or mistaken confessions that could be invalid, Allah would not have made them deserving of punishment based on testimonies that might be true or false. Rather, in such a case, He would have stipulated the condition of those testimonies being true before punishing them. This is evident in verses such as: 'They have certainly disbelieved who say, "Allah is one of three."' (Al-Mā'idah 5:73) 'They have certainly disbelieved who say, "Allah is the Messiah, the son of Mary."' (Al-Mā'idah 5:72) —and similar statements."[790]

Shaykh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Ibn Bāz was asked: Question: A message was received from listener Abd al-Raḥīm Aḥmad Ḥumaydān, a member of the Egyptian educational mission in North Yemen. Our brother says: "I heard this hadith from one of the esteemed scholars, and I would like to ask about its authenticity. If it is authentic, who is the father of the Prophet ﷺ mentioned in the hadith? And why does this statement apply to him?" A Jewish man came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked him: "O Muhammad! Where is my father?" (The Jewish man's father had passed away.) The Prophet ﷺ replied: "Your father is in the Fire." When the Jewish man's face changed, the Prophet ﷺ said to him: "Indeed, my father and your father are in the Fire."

"He was informing him that the matter is not specific to his father alone; rather, everyone who died upon Jāhiliyyah (pre-Islamic ignorance) is among the people of the Fire because they died in a state of disbelief in Allah—except for those proven to be from Ahl al-Fatrah (people who did not receive the message or invitation to Islam). Their matter is left to Allah's judgment. However, in this world, they are given the same ruling as disbelievers in Jāhiliyyah: they are not washed, not prayed over, and are considered under the rulings of Jāhiliyyah.

But if, in reality, a person had not received the message or the invitation to Islam, then he falls under the category of Ahl al-Fatrah. According to the correct view, they will be tested on the

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[790] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā by Ibn Taymiyyah 7/557-558]

Day of Judgment—whoever obeys will enter Paradise, and whoever disobeys will enter Hellfire. This is an authentic hadith."[791]

Shaykh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Ibn Bāz was asked:

Question: Is it permissible to eat the slaughtered animals of those who hold polytheistic beliefs, such as making vows, offering sacrifices, and supplicating to those they claim to be saints (awliyā')—while knowing that the conclusive proof (ḥujjah) has not been fully established against them to remove their doubts?

Answer: "Whoever is known for holding a corrupt, polytheistic creed, his slaughtered animal is not permissible to eat. If he lives among Muslims, then he has no excuse because he neither inquired nor cared. If it is known that he worships other than Allah—such as those who worship al-Badawi, al-Husayn, al-Hasan, ʿAli (may Allah be pleased with him), Ibn ʿArabi, or others whom they call saints—then such people are disbelievers, and their slaughtered animals are impermissible to eat. The same applies to anyone who worships other than Allah, makes vows for them, offers sacrifices to them, or seeks their intercession.

This is major shirk; it is the practice of Jāhiliyyah (pre-Islamic ignorance)—the same as what Quraysh did with Hubal, al-Lāt, and al-ʿUzza, and what the people of Nūḥ did with Wadd, Suwāʿ, and others like them. Such individuals are considered among those upon whom the proof (ḥujjah) has been established, because they live among Muslims, and the Qur'an, Sunnah, and the words of scholars have reached them. If someone has not received any of this knowledge, it is only due to his negligence and lack of concern.

However, those who live in distant lands, away from Muslims, and belong to Ahl al-Fatrah (people who have not received the message and have never heard the words of Allah or His Messenger), they are considered disbelievers in worldly rulings, but their ultimate judgment is left to Allah in the Hereafter. In this world, their slaughtered animals are not permissible to eat as long as they practice the ways of the disbelievers. However, on the Day of Judgment, they will be tested—if they obey, they will enter Paradise, and if they disobey, they will enter Hellfire. This is the correct view regarding Ahl al-Fatrah."[792]

al-ʿAllāmah ʿAbdullāh Abā Butayn said: We say: Anyone who does such acts today at these shrines is undoubtedly a polytheist and disbeliever, as evidenced by the Qur'an, Sunnah, and consensus. We know that those who do this, while claiming to be Muslim, are driven to such

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[791] https://binbaz.org.sa/fatwas/18003/شرح-حديث-ان-ابي-و اباك-في-النار

[792] https://binbaz.org.sa/fatwas/8613/حكم-اكل-ذبائح-اصحاب-العقائد-الشركية

acts by ignorance. If they were aware that these actions bring them far away from Allah and are acts of shirk that Allah has forbidden, they would not have committed them.

All scholars have declared them disbelievers, and they have not excused them due to ignorance, despite what some misguided individuals claim—that these people are excused because they are ignorant..... As for many people today, they claim that what these misguided individuals say and do at the shrines is not shirk. Instead, they may say it is permissible or recommended, as some of the misguided scholars assert."[793]

al-Qarāfī said: "Therefore, Allah has not excused ignorance in the fundamentals of religion (Uṣūl al-Dīn) by unanimous consensus (ijmāʿ). However, in secondary matters (Furūʿ), ignorance may serve as an excuse. For instance, if a person drinks alcohol believing it to be lawful or engages in relations with a woman thinking she is his wife, he is excused due to ignorance.

Likewise, the obligation of rational inquiry was established to prevent ignorance regarding essential religious knowledge, as failing to do so would amount to an impossible burden (taklīf mā lā yuṭāq), which is rejected in Islamic law. Similarly, if disbelief (kufr) occurs despite a person's sincere effort to seek the truth, Allah will still hold him accountable, and his effort will not save him due to the grave nature and high status of this matter. The apparent meaning of the religious texts indicates that whoever does not believe in Allah and His Messenger and does not perform righteous deeds will have the Hellfire as his eternal abode."[794]

ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Ḥasan said: "The scholars, may Allah have mercy on them, followed the path of steadfastness and discussed the chapter on the ruling of the apostate (murtad). None of them said that if a person speaks or does something of disbelief (kufr), while not knowing that it contradicts the two testimonies of faith (shahādatān), he is not considered a disbeliever due to his ignorance. Allah has clarified in His Book that some of the polytheists were ignorant imitators , but He did not exempt them from His punishment due to their ignorance or imitation."[795]

ʿAbd al-Laṭīf ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Ḥasan Āl al-Shaykh said: "The people of knowledge and faith do not differ in the fact that if a person utters or performs something that leads to their disbelief, shirk, or corruption, they are judged according to that, even if they testify to the two testimonies of faith (shahādatān) and fulfill some of the pillars of Islam. The only time a judgment of disbelief is withheld from an original disbeliever is when they testify to the two

[793] Ad-Durar as-Saniyyah 10/404-405
[794] Kitāb Sharḥ Tanqīḥ al-Fuṣūl p.439 by al-Qarāfī
[795] Ad-Durar as-Saniyyah 11/479

testimonies and no contradiction or opposition to them is apparent. This is clear and well understood even by beginner students of knowledge."[796]

Shaykh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Ibn Bāz was asked: Question: "May Allah bless your deeds! The author said: "He may say it while being ignorant, yet he is not excused for his ignorance?" Answer: "Because he is among Muslims, and he has access to the Book and Sunnah—it is near to him. This implies a form of negligence."

Question: "Should this be applied to someone who is negligent (mufarriṭ)?" Answer: "Yes, because he is a negligent person who has the ability to learn but did not care."

Answer: "This is a great matter, and the principle is that one who is among Muslims and has received the Book and the Sunnah is not excused. Allah, the Almighty, said: "This (Qur'an) is a clear message for the people" [Ibrahim: 52], and He also said: "And this Qur'an has been revealed to me that I may warn you thereby and whomever it reaches" [Al-Anʿam: 19]. Whoever has received the Qur'an and Sunnah is not excused; rather, he is at fault due to his negligence and lack of concern for learning. Interjection: But can it be said that this is a disputed issue? Answer: No, it is not a disputed issue, except in subtle cases that may be unclear, such as the story of the man who told his family to burn his body."[797]

Shaykh Ibn ʿUthaymīn said: "If we see a disbeliever, we treat them as a disbeliever, and we do not say, "We do not declare them a disbeliever by name," as some students of knowledge mistakenly say today. They [The Murji'ah] claim: If you see someone who does not pray, do not declare them a disbeliever by name." How can we not declare them a disbeliever? If we see someone prostrating to an idol, we do not say, "Do not declare them a disbeliever by name," because perhaps their heart is at peace with faith. This is a great error.

We judge by what is apparent. So, if we find someone not praying, we say, "This person is a disbeliever," openly. If we see someone prostrating to an idol, we say, "This person is a disbeliever," and we hold them accountable to the rulings of Islam. If they do not comply, we kill them. However, regarding the matter of the Hereafter, we do not testify for anyone specifically—whether for Paradise or Hell—except for those whom the Prophet (peace be upon him) has testified for, or those mentioned explicitly in the Qur'an."[798]

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[796] Ad-Durar as-Saniyyah 12/345
[797] Sharḥ Kashf ash-Shubuhāt by Shaykh Ibn Bāz p.26-27
[798] Tafsīr Sūrat al-Mā'idah by Shaykh Ibn ʿUthaymīn p.403

Shaykh Ṣāliḥ al-Fawzān was asked: “May Allah bless you, esteemed scholar. A questioner asks: Is this statement a view of the people of Sunnah, that every action or statement that causes the person to be declared a disbeliever (kafir) is only because it indicates disbelief in the heart?”

Answer: “This is not what the people of Sunnah and the Jama'ah have said. They do not say this. We rule based on what is apparent. We have no knowledge of the unseen, only the visible. So, if someone commits shirk by saying or doing something openly—such as slaughtering for other than Allah, making vows to other than Allah, or prostrating to other than Allah—we declare them a disbeliever based on their actions. If they speak words of disbelief, we judge them as disbelievers based on their words. We do not judge what is in the heart. Likewise, if someone accepts Islam and outwardly demonstrates Islam, we judge them as Muslim based on their appearance. We only judge by outward appearances, not by what is hidden.”[799]

Shaykh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Ibn Bāz was asked: “Some contemporary individuals have stated that anyone who says or does something that constitutes kufr (disbelief) should not be declared a disbeliever until the proof (hujjah) is established against them, and they have included those who worship graves in this category? Answer: “This is due to their ignorance. Grave worshippers are disbelievers, as are the Jews and the Christians. However, when it comes to execution, they should be given the opportunity to repent. If they repent, fine; if not, they should be executed.”

Question: But is it necessary for the proof (hujjah) to be established against them? Answer: “The Quran has reached them: “This is a message for the people” [Ibrahim: 52]. They have been informed that they are among the Muslims: “And it was revealed to this Qur’an, to warn you by it, and whomsoever it reaches” [Al-An’am: 19], “This is a message for the people” [Ibrahim: 52], “O Messenger, deliver what has been revealed to you” [Al-Ma’idah: 67]. The Messenger has delivered it, and the Quran is in front of them, being heard in broadcasts and other places, but they do not care or pay attention. And when someone from outside their circle warns them, they excuse themselves.”[800]

Shaykh Muḥammad Ibn ʿAbdul-Wahhāb said in one of his statements: "The one upon whom the proof has not been established is the one who is newly embraced to Islam, or grew up in a distant desert, or it pertains to a hidden issue, such as the issue of ṣarf and ʿaṭf. He is not considered a disbeliever until he knows." As for the fundamentals of religion that Allah has clarified and firmly established in His Book, the proof of Allah is the Qur'an. Whoever it

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[799] https://alfawzan.af.org.sa/ar/node/9646

[800] Sharḥ Kashf ash-Shubuhāt by Shaykh Ibn Bāz p.114-115

reaches, the proof has reached him. The real issue, however, is that you have not distinguished between the establishment of the proof and understanding the proof.

The disbelievers and hypocrites did not understand the proof of Allah, even though it was established for them, as Allah says: "Or do you think that most of them hear or understand? They are like cattle; rather, they are even more astray." (Surah Al-Furqan: 44) And Allah also says: "And We placed veils over their hearts so that they do not understand it, and deafness in their ears." (Surah Al-Anfal: 23) The establishment of the proof and its reaching them is one thing, and understanding it is another. Allah declared them disbelievers due to the proof reaching them, even though they did not understand it."[801]

Shaykh Muḥammad Ibn ʿAbdul-Wahhāb said: "The response to these individuals is abundant in the Qur'an, the Sunnah, and the consensus. One of the clearest responses to them is their own acknowledgment, in most cases, that this is major shirk. Additionally, the acknowledgment of other scholars from various regions, that most of them have fallen into shirk and fought against the people of Tawḥīd, yet they could not help but acknowledge it because of its clarity.

The second issue: The acknowledgment that this is major shirk, but they claim that only those who deny Islam entirely, reject the Messenger, deny the Qur'an, and follow Judaism, Christianity, or others, are disbelievers. This is the argument used by those who engage in shirk and obstinacy in these times. As for the first issue, there is little debate on it—praise be to Allah—due to the acknowledgment of it by the scholars of the polytheists.

Know that understanding this issue clearly is sufficient to refute it without needing specific evidence, for two reasons:

The first reason: According to their argument, shirk in Allah and idol worship have no effect on declaring someone a disbeliever, because they claim that if a person leaves one religion and follows another, rejects the Messenger and the Qur'an, they are a disbeliever—even if they do not worship idols, like the Jews. If someone who claims to be Muslim is not declared a disbeliever when committing major shirk—because they say "There is no god but Allah," pray, and perform other acts—it means that shirk and idol worship have no effect on declaring them a disbeliever. It would be like a physical imperfection such as blindness or lameness. If the person claims to be Muslim, they are considered Muslim, but if they claim another religion, they are considered a disbeliever. This is an immense scandal and is enough to refute this false view.

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[801] Ad-Durar as-Saniyyah 10/434

The second reason is that disobedience to the Messenger (peace be upon him) in matters of shirk and idol worship, after knowledge has reached them, is clear disbelief according to nature, reason, and basic knowledge. It is inconceivable that you would ask a person, even one of the most ignorant and dull individuals: "What do you say about someone who disobeys the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) and refuses to abandon idol worship and shirk, while claiming to be a Muslim and a follower?" Without hesitation, they would naturally declare him a disbeliever, without needing to refer to evidence or ask any scholar.

However, due to the prevalence of ignorance, the rarity of knowledge, and the large number of people speaking on this issue, including the atheists, the matter has become unclear to some of the common Muslims who sincerely seek the truth. Do not belittle this issue, but instead, reflect deeply on the detailed evidence. Perhaps Allah will bless you with firm faith and make you one of the leaders who guide by His command."[802]

Shaykẖ ʿAbd Al-Laṭīf said: "Even he did not categorically declare as kāfir the ignorant person who calls upon others besides Allah—whether they be the occupants of graves or others—if they had no one to advise them and convey to them the ḥujjah (proof) that, upon rejecting it, one would become a disbeliever. In one of his letters, he stated:

"If we do not fight those who worship the dome of al-Kawwāz until we first call them to dedicate their worship sincerely to Allah alone, then how can we declare as kāfir those who have not migrated to us, even if they are believers and muwaḥḥidūn (upholders of monotheism)?"

He was also asked about such ignorant people and confirmed that whoever has had the ḥujjah established against them and is capable of understanding it commits kufr by worshiping graves. His previous statements already suffice on this matter. At the same time, the great scholar Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy on him, unequivocally ruled that those who blindly follow their shaykhs in matters that constitute kufr—despite having the ability to seek out and recognize the truth but deliberately turning away—are indeed disbelievers.

As for those who are incapable and unqualified to comprehend the message brought by the messengers, he classified them as akin to ahl al-fatrah—those who did not receive the message of any prophet. Neither of these two groups is to be judged as Muslims, nor are they included under the label of Muslims, even according to those who refrain from declaring some of them as disbelievers, as will be elaborated.

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[802] Ad-Durar as-Saniyyah 9/425-426

However, shirk still applies to them, and its label encompasses them. What Islam remains when its very foundation is contradicted? Its most fundamental pillar is the shahādah: Lā ilāha illa Allāh (There is no god but Allah). The persistence of Islam and its name—while engaging in some of the acts mentioned by jurists in the chapter on ḥukm al-murtadd (the ruling on apostasy)—is more apparent than its persistence while calling upon and worshiping the ṣāliḥūn (righteous figures). But the ʿIrāqī (the objector) refuses to acknowledge that this is ʿibādah (worship) and duʿāʾ (supplication); rather, he claims it is tawassul (seeking intercession) and nidāʾ (mere calling), considering it even recommended! Far, far is he from the truth! Where is the escape when God is the seeker? The way has been blocked, just as it was for the caravan and the wild onager.

By what Allah has bestowed—the revelation of His noble Book, which falsehood cannot approach from before it or behind it, a revelation from the All-Wise, the Most Praiseworthy. And by what was brought by Muhammad, the servant and messenger of Allah, in terms of wisdom, guidance, and clarification of the limits of what Allah has revealed. Allah, the Almighty, continues to plant individuals for this religion who uphold His proofs against His servants, striving in the cause of clarifying His faith and law, and refuting those who distort His Book and His religion, diverting it from its true meaning."[803]

Abā Biṭīn Refutation of the doubt of the Murji'ah and the burning man. He said: "Some who argue in defense of the polytheists cite the story of the man who instructed his family to burn his body after his death as evidence that someone who commits an act of disbelief out of ignorance is not deemed a disbeliever—only the stubborn rejecter is.

The response to this is that Allah ﷻ sent His messengers as bearers of glad tidings and warnings so that people would have no excuse before Him after the messengers had been sent. The greatest message they conveyed and called people to was the worship of Allah ﷻ alone, without any partner, and the prohibition of associating others with Him in worship.

If someone who commits major polytheism is excused due to ignorance, then who is not excused? The implication of this claim is that Allah ﷻ has no argument against anyone except the stubborn rejecter. However, the proponent of this argument cannot remain consistent in their reasoning; they will inevitably contradict themselves. For instance, they cannot refrain from declaring as disbelievers those who doubt Muḥammad's ﷺ prophethood, the resurrection, or other fundamental tenets of faith—yet the doubter, too, is ignorant.

he then goes on to say:

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[803] Minhāj at-Ta'sīs wat-Taqdīs fī Kashf Shubuhāt Dāwūd Ibn Jirjīs by Shaykẖ ʿAbd Al-Laṭīf p.99

The one who claims that a person who commits kufr (disbelief) due to ta'wīl (misinterpretation), ijtihād (independent reasoning), khata' (mistake), taqlīd (blind following), or jahl (ignorance) is excused is in clear opposition to the Kitāb (Qur'an), the Sunnah, and the Ijmāʿ (scholarly consensus) without a doubt. Moreover, such a person must inevitably contradict their own principle, for if they were to apply it consistently, they would inevitably fall into kufr themselves—just as one would if they hesitated in declaring as kāfir someone who doubts the Risālah (prophethood) of Muḥammad ﷺ. As for the man who instructed his family to burn his body and whom ALLĀH (ﷻ) forgave despite his doubt regarding one of the attributes of the Almighty Lord, He forgave him because the message had not reached him—this is what several scholars have stated.

For this reason Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله, said: "Whoever doubts one of the attributes of the Lord, and such doubt is in something that one like him should not be ignorant of, is a disbeliever. However, if it is something that one like him could be ignorant of, he is not deemed a disbeliever." He further stated: "This is why the Prophet (ﷺ) did not declare the man who doubted Allah's power to be a disbeliever,because such disbelief only applies after the message has reached a person." Ibn ʿAqīl also held this view, interpreting the case as one where the man had not received the message.

Shaykh Taqi Ad-Dīn's stance regarding Allah's attributes was that ignorance does not render a person a disbeliever. However, when it comes to polytheism and similar matters, he did not hold the same view, as will be shown later,إن شاء الله. We have already mentioned some of his statements regarding the Ittihadiyyah (a sect that believed in the unity of existence) and others, and his ruling that whoever doubts their disbelief is himself a disbeliever. The author of Al-Ikhtiyarat stated: "Apostasy applies to anyone who associates others with Allah, hates the Prophet ﷺ or what he brought, fails to reject wrongdoing in his heart, believes that some of the Companions fought alongside the disbelievers or deems such an act permissible, denies a matter upon which there is definitive consensus, or places intermediaries between himself and Allah relying on them, calling upon them, and seeking from them—this is unanimous disbelief."

He further stated: "Whoever doubts one of Allah's attributes in a way that one like him should not be ignorant of is an apostate. However, if it is something one like him could be ignorant of, he is not an apostate. This is why the Prophet ﷺ did not declare the man who doubted Allah's power to be a disbeliever."

Thus, in the previous discussion on what constitutes disbelief, a distinction was made regarding attributes between the ignorant and the knowledgeable. However, the Shaykh's stance on

refraining from declaring the Jahmiyyah and others as disbelievers contradicts the explicit statements of Imām Aḥmad and other scholars of Islam.

Al-Majd said: "In every bid'ah where we declare its advocate a disbeliever, we deem its follower a sinner. This includes beliefs such as the claim that the Qurʾān is created, that Allah's knowledge is created, that His names are created, that He will not be seen in the Hereafter, cursing the Companions out of religious conviction, or defining faith as mere belief without action, and similar heresies. Anyone who knowingly advocates such ideas and debates in their defense is ruled a disbeliever." Imām Aḥmad explicitly stated this in multiple places.

So reflect on how they ruled such individuals as disbelievers despite their ignorance."[804]

Shaykh Sulaymān ibn Saḥmān said in his qaṣīdah "hijāʾ ghabī jāhil dhī ḥamāqah":
"We followed the path and way of the Salaf,
So that we may be saved on a day of great terrors.
By declaring all the grave worshippers as disbelievers,
And likewise, the Jahmi or whoever resembles him."[805]

Imām ʿAbdullāh Ibn Aḥmad reported: Abū Bakr Saʿīd ibn Yaʿqūb al-Ṭālaqānī narrated to us, saying: Al-Muʾammal ibn Ismāʿīl narrated to us, saying: I heard ʿUmārah ibn Zādhān say: "It has reached me that the Qadariyyah will be resurrected on the Day of Judgment alongside the polytheists. They will say, 'By Allah, we were not polytheists! By Allah, we were not polytheists!' Then it will be said to them: 'Indeed, you committed shirk without realizing it.'" He also said: "It has reached me that on the Day of Judgment, it will be said to them: 'You are the adversaries of Allah, the Almighty.'"[806]
Imām Aḥmad said while transmitting the Ijma in his letter to al-Muṣaddad: "I advise you and myself to fear Allah, the Almighty, and to adhere to the Sunnah. You have witnessed the

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[804] al-Intiṣār li-Ḥizb Allāh al-Muwaḥḥidīn wa ar-Radd ʿalā al-Mujādal ʿan al-Mushrikīn p.22 and 26-28
[805] https://www.aldiwan.net/poem128736.html
[806] Kitāb al-Sunnah by Imām ʿAbdullāh Ibn Aḥmad p.403-404 — In al-Qadar by al-Firyābī (242), Abū Makhzūm narrated from Sayyār and Abū Hāshim al-Rummānī that they used to say: "Denial of Qadar is shirk."
Ibn Taymiyyah, in Minhāj al-Sunnah (3/276), while discussing the reason why the Qadariyyah were called mushrikūn, stated: "It is said: If events occur without being caused by Allah's action or power, this constitutes clear association (shirk) with Allah. This is why these people were likened to the Magians, who believe that the creator of evil is not the creator of good, thereby making Allah a partner with another. Whoever considers the actions of people to be independent of Allah's will, as if they are merely the acts of agents acting under a sovereign, has fallen into clear shirk—one that even the idol worshippers did not approve of, because it is shirk in lordship (rubūbiyyah), not in divinity (ulūhiyyah). The idol worshippers admitted that their idols were owned by Allah, as they said: 'Here we are, O Allah, You have no partner—except a partner that belongs to You; You own him and all that he owns.' These people, however, claim that what a person possesses of his actions is his own independent property, separate from Allah.

consequences for those who oppose it and what has been said about those who follow it. It has been reported from the Prophet ﷺ that he said, "Indeed, Allah will enter a servant into Paradise by the Sunnah, for he adheres to it." Therefore, I command you not to prefer anything over the Qur'an, for it is the speech of Allah, the Almighty. Whatever Allah spoke, it is not created. What He has informed us about the past nations is not created. What is in the Lawḥ al-Maḥfūẓ, what is in the Mushafs, and how it is recited, and however it is described — all of it is the speech of Allah, and it is not created. Whoever says it is created is a disbeliever in Allah, the Almighty. Whoever does not declare such a person a disbeliever is also a disbeliever....

It has been agreed upon by the scholars we have encountered that the Jahmiyyah split into three sects. One group said that the Qur'an is the created speech of Allah. Another group said that the Qur'an is the speech of Allah but remained silent, and they are the cursed al-Wāqifah group. Others said that our words with the Qur'an are created. All of these groups are Jahmiyyah and Kuffār and should be given the opportunity to repent. If they repent, they are spared; if not, they should be killed.

It has been unanimously agreed by the scholars we have encountered that anyone holding these views, if they do not repent, should not be married, their legal rulings are invalid, and their slaughtered animals should not be consumed.

Faith is both speech and action: it increases with good deeds and decreases with bad deeds. A person can leave īmān and enter Islam, but **nothing removes a person from Islam except associating partners with Allah**, the Almighty, or rejecting any of Allah's obligatory duties out of denial. If one abandons a duty out of laziness or negligence, they remain under Allah's will. If He wills, He may punish them, and if He wills, He may forgive them."[807]

Shaykh Bin Bāz was asked: "Is ignorance an excuse in matters of Tawḥīd? And does this apply to those who invoke and make vows to the saints, considering them excused due to their ignorance?

A: "One who resides in the land of Tawḥīd is not excused for ignorance. As long as he is among Muslims—not in a period of discontinuity (between prophets) nor in a place far from the people of Islām—but rather living among Muslims, he is not excused in matters of Tawḥīd. If he commits shirk, he is held accountable for it, just as it happens now in Miṣr, Ash-Shām and other regions, where shirk is practiced at the graves of Al-Badawī and others.

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[807] Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah 1/342-343]

It is obligatory upon the scholars of Islām to warn people, caution them against this shirk, and admonish them in mosques and elsewhere. A person must seek knowledge and ask questions; he should not merely follow others blindly. Rather, he must inquire, as Allah, the Most High, says: {So ask the people of knowledge if you do not know} (An-Naḥl: 44). A person cannot remain in disbelief and shirk simply because he sees others practicing it without seeking understanding or reflection. It has been authentically reported from the Prophet ﷺ that when someone asked him about his father, he replied: "Indeed, your father is in the Fire." When the man's face changed, the Prophet added: "Indeed, my father and your father are in the Fire." (Narrated by Muslim in his Ṣaḥīḥ). His father had died during Al-Jāhiliyyah (pre-Islamic ignorance), as they had received a religion inherited from Khalīlullāh Ibrāhīm عليه السلام, which was based on Tawḥīd.

The Prophet's mother also passed away during Al-Jāhiliyyah. He sought permission from his Lord to pray for her forgiveness, but it was not granted. However, he was allowed to visit her grave. This proves that one who dies upon disbelief is neither prayed for nor supplicated for, even if they lived in the pre-Islamic period. So how then for someone who lives among Muslims, in the lands of Tawḥīd, who reads the Qur'ān and hears the ḥadīths of the Messenger ﷺ? Such a person is even more deserving of being ruled as a disbeliever and treated as such. Many of them, if they were to hear someone calling them to Tawḥīd and warning them against shirk, would resist, grow arrogant, argue, or even fight to defend their false religion and blind imitation of their ancestors. Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh.

It is obligatory upon every responsible individual to seek knowledge, pursue the truth, and gain understanding in his religion. He should not be content with following the general public in their disbelief, misguidance, and corrupt practices. Instead, he must ask the scholars and remain close to the people of knowledge."[808]

Shaykh ar-Rājiḥī was asked: "Is a person ignorant of Tawḥīd excused for their ignorance regarding the matter of invoking others besides Allah and worshiping graves?

A: Such a person is not excused for their ignorance. Allah says: "And We never punish until We have sent a messenger." (Al-Isrā': 15). The messenger has been sent, and Allah also says: "And it has been revealed to me that this Qur'an is to warn you thereby, and whomever it reaches." (Al-Anʿām: 19). Thus, whoever receives the Qur'an has had the evidence established against them.

The excuse for ignorance applies only to those of the Fatrah (the time before the sending of the messenger), but after the messenger was sent, there is no excuse. The messenger was sent with

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[808] Fatāwā Nūr ʿalā ad-Darb by Shaykh Ibn Bāz 1/241-242

the message of Tawḥīd and the Qur'an, calling to the Oneness of Allah and prohibiting shirk . Therefore, no one has an excuse regarding this issue.

However, a person may be excused in matters that are subtle or obscure, which are not clear to them, similar to the people of Fatrah who never heard the Qur'an."[809]

Shaykh ʿAbdullāh Abā Buṭayn said: "And the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "Whoever dies knowing that there is no deity worthy of worship but Allah will enter Paradise. The scholars have used these verses and similar ones to prove that the first obligation upon a person is to know Allah. These verses indicate that the most important duty is understanding the meaning of "There is no deity but Allah", and the greatest ignorance is the lack of understanding its meaning. Understanding this is one of the most crucial obligations, and ignorance of it is the most severe and detestable ignorance.

It is astonishing that some people, when they hear someone speak about the meaning of this statement, both in negation and affirmation, criticize it, saying, "We are not required to speak about people and their beliefs! To them, it should be said: No, you are required to know the concept of Tawḥīd, for Allah created jinn and humans for this purpose, and sent all the messengers calling to it, as well as to know its opposite, which is shirk that is unforgivable. There is no excuse for a person who is required to know this.

It is not permissible to follow blindly in this matter because it is the foundation of all foundations. Whoever does not recognize what is right and deny what is wrong will be doomed, especially in the case of the greatest right, which is Tawḥīd, and the greatest wrong, which is shirk."[810]

Shaykh Bin Bāz was asked: "What was the stance of the early scholars (al-Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ), such as Imām Ibn Taymiyyah and Imām Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, on the issue of al-ʿudhr bil-jahl (excusing ignorance)? Is this concept valid? Did the early scholars address it, or is it baseless in matters of tawḥīd?"

A: Ignorance can sometimes be an excuse, and at other times, it is not. If a person is far removed from the lands of Islam and the scholars—such as someone who grows up in a non-Muslim land where the message of Islam, the Qur'an, and the Sunnah have not reached them—then such a person is excused due to ignorance. They fall under the category of ahl al-fatrah (people of the

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[809] Sharḥ Kitāb as-Sunnah by al-Barbahārī – Shaykh ar-Rājiḥī - https://shamela.ws/book/35083/148
[810] al-Intiṣār li-Ḥizb Allāh al-Muwaḥḥidīn wa ar-Radd ʿalā al-Mujādal ʿan al-Mushrikīn by Shaykh ʿAbdullāh Abā Buṭayn p.10-11

intermission) and will be tested on the Day of Judgment: if they obey, they will enter Paradise; if they disobey, they will enter Hell.

Additionally, a person may be excused in subtle and complex issues in religious jurisprudence (furūʿ), which may not be clear to them. An example of this is when the Prophet ﷺ excused a man who was in the state of iḥrām but had applied perfume and worn a robe. The Prophet ﷺ said to him: "Remove your robe, wash off the perfume, and complete your ʿumrah as you would your ḥajj." The Prophet ﷺ did not impose any penalty upon him because he acted out of ignorance. Thus, ignorance is a valid excuse in matters that are unclear or obscure—such as secondary jurisprudential rulings (furūʿ)—or in the case of someone distant from Islamic lands and knowledge (e.g., people living in remote areas where Islam has not reached). These individuals are treated like the people of intermission (ahl al-fatrah), and the correct view is that they will be tested on the Day of Judgment.

However, someone who lives among Muslims, hears the Qur'an and Sunnah, and has access to knowledge is not excused—neither in matters of creed (ʿaqīdah) nor in other fundamental aspects of the religion. Allah says: "And this Qur'an has been revealed to me so that I may warn you and whomever it reaches." (Sūrat al-Anʿām 6:19). This means that the Qur'an itself is a warning and that Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ is a warner. Therefore, anyone who has received the Qur'an and Sunnah, and lives among Muslims, has no excuse for ignorance. It is their responsibility to seek knowledge, ask scholars, and learn about their religion. And Allah is the source of help."[811]

Shaykh Bin Bāz was asked: "Are those who worship graves excused due to ignorance, even though there are callers to Tawḥīd among them?"

A: It has already been clarified that they are not excused. They are obligated to seek knowledge, understand their religion, and ask about what confuses them. If they remain silent and persist in worshiping the dead, trees, stones, prophets, angels, or jinn, then they are considered disbelievers due to their acts—such as invoking these beings, seeking their intercession, asking them to heal the sick, or bring back the lost.

He was also asked "Is it permissible to pray behind someone known to invoke others besides Allāh? What is the ruling on the prayer of those who follow him?"

A: Whoever prays behind someone who commits shirk, their prayer is invalid, as long as that person calls upon other than Allāh, seeks aid from other than Him, or makes vows to other than

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[811] Aqwāl ash-Shaykh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Ibn Bāz fī al-ʿUdhr bil-Jahl p.19-20

Him. It is not permissible to pray behind a disbeliever, and the prayer behind a disbeliever is invalid according to the scholars. The only debate exists regarding the sinful Muslim (fāsiq), but as for the disbeliever, there is no difference of opinion."[812]

Shaykh ʿAbd Al-Laṭīf said: "As for the Jahmiyyah and the worshipers of graves, citing such texts to argue against declaring them disbelievers is only done by someone who has not truly understood Islam and the message with which Allah sent His noble messengers. The essence of what the messengers brought and called to is the obligation of worshiping Allah alone with no partners, sincerely dedicating all acts of devotion to Him, and not associating any of His creation in what is exclusively His right. Moreover, they affirmed what Allah described Himself with—attributes of perfection and majesty.

Whoever opposes this message, denies it, or invalidates it is a misguided disbeliever, even if he says, "La ilaha illa Allah" and claims to be a Muslim. This is because the shirk he commits contradicts the very meaning of the testimony of faith. Thus, merely uttering "La ilaha illa Allah" does not benefit him, as he has spoken words he did not act upon, nor did he believe in what they entail. As for the statement: "We say that the statement is disbelief, but we do not judge the speaker as a disbeliever,"

This is an absolute misunderstanding because such an expression only applies to specific individuals. The issue of declaring an individual a disbeliever (takfīr al-muʿayyan) is well known: if someone utters a statement that is itself an act of disbelief, it is said, "Whoever says this statement is a disbeliever." However, when a specific individual says it, he is not judged as a disbeliever until the proof that necessitates disbelief for its denier has been established against him. This applies to hidden matters whose evidences may be obscure to some people, such as issues related to qadar and irjā' and similar matters that were introduced by the people of desires (ahl al-ahwā'). Some of their statements entail disbelief because they involve rejecting the clear and established proofs from the Qur'an and Sunnah. In such cases, while the statement itself may be disbelief, the one who utters it is not necessarily judged as a disbeliever due to possible barriers like ignorance or lack of knowledge about contradicting the text or its implications.

Religious rulings only become binding after they have been conveyed. Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah sanctify his soul) mentioned this in many of his writings. He also stated that some prominent scholars of kalām were declared disbelievers after he had clarified this principle. He said: "This applies to hidden matters, and it may be said that no judgment of disbelief should be made in such cases. However, regarding the obvious and clear issues or those known by necessity in religion, there is no hesitation in declaring the one who contradicts them

[812] Aqwāl ash-Shaykh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Ibn Bāz fī al-ʿUdhr bil-Jahl p.26

a disbeliever. Therefore, do not use this statement "We say that the statement is disbelief, but we do not judge the speaker as a disbeliever" as a crutch to refute those who declare a town disbelieving when it refuses to worship Allah alone or denies His attributes, after the proof has been established against it and the truth has been made clear."[813]

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah said: "This applies when dealing with obscure doctrinal issues; in such cases, it may be said that a person is mistaken and misguided but should not be declared a disbeliever until the proof that establishes disbelief against him has been made clear. However, this situation also occurs among certain groups in matters that are clear and well known to both the general public and the scholars of Islām—indeed, even the Jews and Christians recognize that Muḥammad (ﷺ) was sent with these teachings and that he declared those who opposed them to be disbelievers.

For example, his command to worship Allāh alone with no partner, and his prohibition against worshiping anyone besides Allāh—whether angels, prophets, the sun, the moon, the stars, idols, or anything else. These are among the most apparent symbols of Islām. Likewise, his command to establish the five daily prayers, his obligation regarding them, and his emphasis on their importance. Similarly, his enmity toward the Jews, Christians, polytheists, Ṣābians, and Magians, as well as his prohibition of immoral acts, usury, alcohol, gambling, and other such matters. Yet, despite all of this, many of their leaders have fallen into these prohibited actions and thus became apostates, even though they may later repent and return to Islām."[814]

Ibn Taymiyyah said: "Some people have claimed that they have "become essences" (tajawharu). This is the belief of a group who engaged in spiritual exercises for a long time and then said: "We no longer care about what we do. Commands and prohibitions are merely formalities for the common people. If they had reached our level of tajawhur, these obligations would also no longer apply to them. The essence of prophethood, they claim, is wisdom and public benefit, which serve to regulate the masses. However, since we are not among the common people, we are not subject to religious obligations, for we have become essences and attained wisdom."

These people are more disbelieving than the Jews and Christians; rather, they are the most disbelieving people on earth. The Jews and Christians at least believed in some parts of revelation while rejecting others, but these people reject everything and refuse to adhere to any aspect of the truth. However, many of them do not openly deny all religious obligations outright; instead, they claim that some obligations no longer apply to them and that some prohibitions are permitted for them. Some among them claim that prayer is no longer required

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[813] Ijmāʿ Ahl as-Sunnah an-Nabawiyyah ʿalā Takfīr al-Muʿaṭṭilah al-Jahmiyyah p.157-159
[814] Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā by Ibn Taymiyyah 4/54

of them because they have reached its intended purpose, while others say it is only unnecessary during moments of divine "witnessing." Some believe that Friday prayers are unnecessary because they have reached a state of perpetual presence with God. Others dismiss the obligation of pilgrimage. Some allow themselves to break the fast in Ramadan without a valid excuse. Some even permit alcohol or claim that it is forbidden only for the common people, whereas the "pure souls" and "righteous ones" are not bound by such restrictions.

A similar belief existed among some early groups regarding alcohol, and the Companions of the Prophet (may Allah be pleased with them) unanimously agreed that such people should be executed if they did not repent. Qudamah ibn Abdullah and a group of his followers drank alcohol, arguing that the verse "There is no sin upon those who believe and do righteous deeds" (5:93) justified their actions.

The consensus reached by the Companions regarding this matter remains agreed upon by the scholars of Islam. There is no dispute among the jurists on this issue. Whoever denies an obligatory act of worship that is well-known and widely established—such as prayer—or denies the prohibition of universally acknowledged sins—such as fornication, oppression, alcohol, or usury—or rejects the permissibility of clearly lawful matters—such as bread, meat, or marriage—has committed apostasy. He is to be given the chance to repent; if he does, his repentance is accepted, but if he refuses, he is to be executed. As for those who secretly hold such beliefs, they are hypocrites and heretics (zindiq), and according to most scholars, they are not even given the opportunity to repent.

Among them are those who permit major sins, such as forming intimate relationships with unrelated women, being alone with them, and engaging in physical contact, claiming that such actions bring them blessings, even though they are explicitly forbidden in Islamic law. Some extend this permissiveness to young boys, claiming that enjoying their beauty or engaging with them physically is a path for some spiritual seekers to ascend from love of creation to love of the Creator. They even encourage actions leading to major immorality and justify sodomy under the pretext of ownership through slavery. All of these individuals are disbelievers by the unanimous agreement of the scholars of Islam."[815]

Shaykh ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān Ibn Ḥasan said: "He (Ibn Qayyim) said: "Islam is the monotheism of Allah and worshipping Him alone with no partner, believing in His Messenger, and following

[815] Mukhtaṣar al-Fatāwā al-Miṣriyyah by Ibn Taymiyyah p.245-247

what he brought. If a person does not fulfill this, he is not a Muslim. Even if he is not oppositional, he is an ignorant disbeliever. The nature of this category is that they are ignorant disbelievers, not oppositional. Their lack of opposition does not take them out of disbelief. The disbeliever is the one who denies the oneness of Allah and denies His Messenger, either out of opposition or ignorance, or following the traditions of their forefathers out of stubbornness."

Allah has informed us in the Qur'an, in several places, of the punishment for those who blindly follow their ancestors from the disbelievers. They will dispute in Hell, and the followers will say: "Our Lord, these are the ones who led us astray, so give them double the punishment in the Fire." Allah will say: "For each there is double, but you do not know." (Al-A'raf: 38) This is a summarized explanation, and this verse has many similar instances in the Qur'an. Praise be to Allah for the clarity of the explanation. The clear verses also show the disbelief of those who associate others with Allah in His worship. Allah says: "When man is touched with harm, he calls upon his Lord, turning to Him alone. But when He grants him a favor from Himself, he forgets what he had been calling to Him before, and he makes equals to Allah to mislead others from His way. Say: 'Enjoy your disbelief for a little while; indeed, you are of the companions of the Fire.'" (Az-Zumar: 8)."[816]

Ibn Taymiyyah said: Regarding those who say there must be an intermediary between us and Allāh: If by "intermediary" they mean that it is necessary to have an intermediary who conveys Allāh's commands and prohibitions, then this is true. People must have a messenger who conveys Allāh's commands and prohibitions and teaches them the religion of Allāh, which He has commanded them to follow. This is something upon which all nations have agreed, and whoever denies this is a disbeliever by consensus.

If by "intermediary" they mean that it is necessary for bringing benefits, warding off harms, providing sustenance for people, and guiding them, then this is polytheism. Allāh declared the polytheists disbelievers because they took intercessors and protectors other than Him to bring them benefits.

Whoever makes the angels or anyone else as lords or intermediaries, calling upon them, relying on them, and asking them—or asking Allāh through them—for the forgiveness of sins, guidance of hearts, relieving of distress, or similar things, is a disbeliever by the consensus of the Muslims.

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[816] Taḥqīq Madhhab Ibn Taymiyyah fī Mas'alatay al-ʿUdhr bil-Jahl wa Takfīr al-Muʿayyan By Shaykh ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān Ibn Ḥasan Āl ash-Shaykh p.32

Whoever makes the scholars from among the people of knowledge and religion as intermediaries for conveying the message of the Prophet ﷺ to the Ummah and teaching them the Prophet's guidance has done what is correct. The Prophet ﷺ said: "The scholars are the heirs of the prophets. Everyone's speech is accepted or rejected except for the speech of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. If they consider them as intermediaries in the sense of a veil, like those who mediate between a king and his subjects, where they present the needs of the creation to Allāh, then this is polytheism and disbelief."[817]

Shaykh ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān Ibn Ḥasan said: "Know that the difference between us and many people lies in the meaning of "Lā ilāha illā Allāh" and acting upon it. They are satisfied with the utterance of the word of Tawḥīd, seeing it as beneficial even if they do not believe in its meaning or act upon it. Anyone with the slightest degree of intellect knows that "Lā ilāha illā Allāh" signifies Tawḥīd, and there is no doubt that polytheism contradicts Tawḥīd, as it nullifies actions. Even if the actions were initially correct, how could they be valid if they were built on disbelief in the meaning of "Lā ilāha illā Allāh" or on polytheism?

Once you understand this, know that the difference between the Prophets and their nations is in the meaning of "Lā ilāha illā Allāh" in its precise application. The phrase "Lā ilāha" negates polytheism and divinity from everything other than Allah, while the phrase "illā Allāh" affirms the divinity of Allah alone, in all of His hidden and apparent forms. This is elaborated upon frequently in the Qur'ān."[818]

al-ʿAllāmah ʿAbdullāh Abā Butayn said: "So, whoever receives the message of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and the Qur'an has had the evidence established against them. They are not excused for disbelief due to ignorance of Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, or the Last Day. After that, there is no excuse for ignorance. Allah, the Exalted, has informed us about the ignorance of many disbelievers while explicitly stating their disbelief. He described the Christians as being ignorant, even though no Muslim doubts their disbelief. We assert the disbelief of most Jews and Christians today, acknowledging their ignorance and imitation. We also believe in the disbelief of those who have any doubt about their disbelief.

The Qur'an indicates that doubt in the fundamentals of religion is disbelief. Doubt is the hesitation between two things, like one who is unsure of the truth of the Prophet or his falsehood, or of the occurrence of resurrection (whether it will happen or not), and similar doubts. This includes someone who does not believe in the obligation of prayer or in its non-obligation, or who does not believe in the prohibition of adultery or in its non-prohibition.

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[817] Mukhtaṣar al-Fatāwā al-Miṣriyyah by Ibn Taymiyyah p.266-267

[818] Taḥqīq Madhhab Ibn Taymiyyah fī Mas'alatay al-ʿUdhr bil-Jahl wa Takfīr al-Muʿayyan By Shaykh ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān Ibn Ḥasan Āl ash-Shaykh p.38

This is disbelief according to the consensus of scholars, and there is no excuse for someone in this state, claiming that they did not understand the proofs and clear signs of Allah. This is because there is no excuse for them after the message has reached them, even if they did not understand it."[819]

Shaykh Abu Muhammad Muwaffaq al-Dīn Ibn Qudāmah said: He said: "To consider something ḥalāl while knowing it is not is istihlāl, and this occurs in two ways: one by believing that Allah has not prohibited it, and the other by failing to believe that Allah has prohibited it. This is a flaw in belief regarding rubūbiyyah or risālah, and it is pure denial, without any basis. The second situation is when someone knows that Allah has prohibited something, yet refuses to adhere to that prohibition and is obstinate. This is a greater disbelief than the one who simply believes it is permissible."

al-ʿAllāmah ʿAbdullāh Abā Butayn said: "His words, may Allah have mercy on him, in matters like this are numerous. He did not limit takfīr to the obstinate, despite the fact that most of those who commit such actions are ignorant and do not know that what they have said or done constitutes kufr. They are not excused due to ignorance in these matters, because some of them directly oppose tawḥīd, which is the greatest of obligations, and others include an opposition to the message, rejecting the clear texts of the Qur'an and Sunnah that are agreed upon by the scholars of Islam.

The early generations and the scholars have clearly stated the takfīr of individuals based on their statements, even when it was known that they were not obstinate. This is why the jurists, may Allah have mercy on them, said: "Whoever denies the obligation of one of the five pillars of worship, or denies the permissibility of bread or similar things, or denies the prohibition of alcohol or similar substances, or even doubts such matters — and this is something that should not be unknown — is a disbeliever. If it is made known to him, and he persists in his denial, he becomes a disbeliever and is to be killed." They did not restrict this ruling to those who are obstinate. They also mentioned in the chapter on the ruling for apostates many actions and statements that make a person an apostate, and they did not limit the ruling to the obstinate."[820]

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[819] Mas'alah fīman Yukaffiru Ghayrahū min al-Muslimīn - Shaykh by Abdullāh Abā Buṭayn p.20-21
[820] Mas'alah fīman Yukaffiru Ghayrahū min al-Muslimīn - Shaykh by Abdullāh Abā Buṭayn p.24-25

al-Kāsānī said: Abu Yusuf narrated from Abu Ḥanīfa this statement, where he said: Abu Ḥanīfa said: "There is no excuse for anyone among the creation in their ignorance of knowing their Creator; because it is obligatory for all creation to know their Lord, Subḥānahu wa Taʿālā, and to believe in His Oneness, due to what they see in the creation of the heavens and the earth, their own creation, and everything else created by Allāh, Subḥānahu wa Taʿālā. As for the obligatory duties, anyone who does not know them and has not received the message, no legal proof has been established upon them according to their words."[821]

Abu Ḥanīfa says there is no excuse for ignorance in Matters of Tawhid.

Imām Shāfiʿī said: A person asked me: "What is knowledge? And what knowledge is obligatory for people to have?" I replied to him: "Knowledge is of two kinds: general knowledge that no adult can be excused for ignorance of, provided their intellect is not overwhelmed. He asked: 'What is an example of that?' I replied: 'Examples include the five daily prayers, the obligation of fasting during the month of Ramaḍān, performing the pilgrimage to the House (if they are able), the zakāt on their wealth, and the prohibition of adultery, murder, theft, alcohol, and anything similar. These are matters that the servants are required to understand, give from their wealth, and refrain from what is prohibited to them.

This type of knowledge is explicitly mentioned in the Book of Allāh and is universally known among the people of Islam, transmitted by their common folk from those who have passed on, who relate it from the Messenger of Allāh. There is no dispute about its narration or its obligation upon them. This is the general knowledge where no error in the report or interpretation is possible, and no disagreement is allowed."[822]

And So does Imām Shāfiʿī.

Imām Ibn aṭ-Ṭabarī said: "As for what one cannot be ignorant of in the religion of Allāh, for those who are accountable because the evidence for it is clear, agreed upon, and perceptible to the senses, it is the belief in the Tawḥīd, and the knowledge of His Names, Attributes, and Justice. This is because anyone who reaches the age of accountability and is in good health and sound mind will not lack clear evidence and proofs that point to the Oneness of their Lord, Glorified and Exalted be He, and make clear to them the truth of this belief.

For this reason, Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, has not excused anyone who is ignorant of this in the way described, especially regarding His Names. If they die in ignorance of them, they are

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[821] Badāʾiʿ as-Ṣanāʾiʿ by al-Kāsānī 9/521
[822] Ar-Risālah by Imām Shāfiʿī p.357-359

placed alongside the arrogant deniers of Him, those who dispute His Oneness, after they have known it, and deny His Lordship in worldly matters and His punishment in the Hereafter. Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, said:

'Say, “Shall we inform you of the greatest losers in their deeds? Those whose efforts are wasted in this life while they think that they are doing well.” They are the ones who disbelieved in the signs of their Lord and in meeting Him. So their deeds are in vain, and We will not assign to them any weight on the Day of Resurrection.'

Thus, Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, equates this person who works in ways displeasing to Allāh, thinking that they are doing what pleases Him, with those who are openly disobedient to Him, knowingly denying His Lordship. He will be treated in the Hereafter as those who were rebellious and arrogant against Him.

This is because both the sincere seeker of truth, even if mistaken, and the arrogant denier have received the same clear evidence that points to the truth of Tawḥīd, His Names, Attributes, and Justice. Therefore, since Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, has removed the excuse for both of them through the clear and agreed-upon evidence that He has shown to their senses, they are to be treated equally in terms of punishment in the Hereafter.

This judgment differs from the case of ignorance regarding the Sharī’ah. As mentioned, if Allāh has not provided conclusive proof to obligate a person with a specific religious duty, then they do not have the knowledge of the obligation of that duty, as there is no clear evidence indicating its obligation. If that is the case, then they are not commanded, and if they are not commanded, they are not in disobedience to Allāh’s command, and thus they do not deserve punishment. This is because obedience and disobedience are determined by following or opposing a direct command.

Indeed, you may argue using the perceptible from the rulings of the Sharīʿah after it has become perceivable to the senses, to make judgments about similar things that have not been perceived by the senses, and you rule based on the analogy to the perceptible one. You differentiate between the mistaken mujtahid and the obstinate one who is in opposition after knowing the truth; thus, you make the mistaken mujtahid rewarded for his effort, and his sin is removed due to his mistake.

However, you equate the ruling of the mistaken mujtahid in the Oneness of Allah (Tawḥīd), His Names, Attributes, and Justice, with that of the obstinate one after knowing the truth. So, what is the distinction between you and those who oppose you in this matter, where they

equate the mistaken mujtahid and the obstinate one after knowing the truth, while you have distinguished between them and made a differentiation?"

It was said: "The difference between me and them is that I and every proponent of Tawḥīd say: Everything perceptible by the sensory faculties in this world is a proof for anyone who seeks to understand the Oneness of Allah (ʿAzza wa Jalla), His Names, His Attributes, and His Justice. Every sign pointing to this is in agreement, not contradictory, and it is consistent and not differing.

But the one who speaks of ijtihād on the uṣūl (foundations) says: Not all of the foundational principles agree in guiding every branch. This is because the proof has been established that, for example, if someone were to engage in intimacy with his wife during the day in the month of Ramaḍān in a situation that requires him to refrain from it, he is obligated to offer expiation (kaffārah) according to the ruling of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). This is a ruling from Allah on the tongue of His Prophet (ﷺ) for one who violates a situation in which intimacy is forbidden.

However, he may be obliged in another situation in which intimacy is forbidden, but it does not necessitate the same ruling. For example, if he were to engage in intimacy during iʿtikāf, or with a woman during her menstrual period, or with a woman who has been divorced with one divorce and has not yet been reconciled, or other similar situations. The rulings concerning the act of intimacy vary depending on the specific conditions, even though in all cases, the individual is prohibited from engaging in intimacy.

The evidence regarding the Oneness of Allah – Glorified and Exalted be He, His Names, His Attributes, and His Justice – is not like this. It is all consistent and not contradictory. Nothing in it differs in its evidence pointing to what everything else indicates. Do you not see that the sky is no clearer in its evidence than the earth, nor the earth than the mountains, nor the mountains than the animals, nor anything perceptible, no matter how large or immense, being any clearer evidence than something smaller and subtler in its existence? Thus, the ruling regarding error in Tawḥīd differs from the ruling regarding error in the Sharīʿah and the obligations (farāʾiḍ) of religion.

If we had not intended brevity in this book and focused on summarizing what we sought to explain, we would have elaborated further on this matter and provided more extensive evidence to support what we have said. However, the explanation provided here should suffice for those who are guided to understanding."[823]

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[823] [At-Tabsīr fī Maʿālim ad-Dīn by Imām Ibn aṭ-Ṭabarī p.116-123]

Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī said: “Some scholars have said that what the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) meant by this statement is the knowledge of Tawḥīd (Islamic monotheism) and what a rational person must believe in. For knowledge of this is an obligation upon every Muslim, and no one is excused for being ignorant of it, as its obligation is universal rather than specific.”[824]

Imām al-Marwazī said:

“They said: Since knowledge of Allah is faith, and ignorance of Him is disbelief, and since performing the obligatory acts is faith, while ignorance of them before their revelation is not disbelief, then after their revelation, one who does not act upon them is not a disbeliever. This is because the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) affirmed their belief in Allah at the beginning of His mission, yet they did not perform the obligations that were later made mandatory upon them. Their ignorance of these matters was not considered disbelief.

Then Allah revealed these obligations, and their acceptance of them and adherence to them was faith. Only the one who rejects them becomes a disbeliever due to his denial of Allah’s message. Had no divine message come from Allah, ignorance of these obligations would not have been considered disbelief. Even after the revelation of the message, if a Muslim has not heard of it, he is not deemed a disbeliever due to his ignorance. **However, ignorance of Allah in all cases is disbelief—whether before or after the revelation of the message.**

They said: For this reason, we say that failing to affirm belief in Allah is disbelief in Him. However, failing to perform obligations while believing that Allah has commanded them is a form of disbelief but not disbelief in Allah; rather, it is disbelief in terms of neglecting the truth—just as a person might say, ‘You have disbelieved in my right and my favor,’ meaning, ‘You have neglected my right and failed to show gratitude for my favor.’[825]

Shaykh Muḥammad Ibn ʿAbdul-Wahhāb said: “And none may be sought for help except Him, nor may sacrifices be offered to anyone besides Him, nor vows made for any other—neither for a near angel nor a sent prophet. Whoever seeks help from other than Him has committed disbelief, whoever offers a sacrifice to other than Him has committed disbelief, and whoever makes a vow to other than Him has committed disbelief, and the like of these acts.

Shaykh Ṣāliḥ al-Fawzān said regarding this: “Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyyah encompasses all acts of worship, and none of them may be directed to anyone other than Allah, for He alone is deserving of them. Whoever dedicates any act of worship to other than Allah is a polytheist,

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[824] al-Faqīh wal-Mutafaqqih By Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī 1/170
[825] Taʿẓīm Qadr aṣ-Ṣalāh - Imām al-Marwazī 2/520]

even if he says, “Lā ilāha illa Allāh.” In fact, even if he worships Allah through various acts of devotion, as long as he does not devote all of them sincerely to Allah alone, he is not a Muslim.

Whoever does this has committed disbelief, even if he says, “Lā ilāha illa Allāh,” because he has not truly actualized its meaning. This is a contradiction—how can someone say “Lā ilāha illa Allāh” while offering sacrifices to others besides Him? How can he claim “Lā ilāha illa Allāh” while seeking help from the dead, the absent, the jinn, or the devils? How can he profess “Lā ilāha illa Allāh” while making vows to others other than Allah? This is a clear contradiction.”[826]

al-ʿAllāmah ʿAbdullāh Abā Butayn said: (Ibn Taymiyyah said) "Whoever establishes intermediaries between Allah and His creation, like intermediaries who stand between a king and his subjects, such that they are the ones who elevate the needs of the people to Allah, and that Allah guides, provides, and grants victory to His servants through them, meaning that the people ask them and they ask Allah—just as intermediaries with kings ask for the people’s needs due to their closeness to the king, and people ask them as a form of respect because they are closer to the king than the petitioner—such individuals are disbelievers and polytheists. They must be called to repentance, and if they do not repent, they should be killed. These individuals are likened to the creator with His creation, and they have made rivals for Allah.

The Quran has extensive refutations of these ideas, far more than can be explained in this fatwa. This is the religion of the polytheists who worshipped idols. They used to say that these idols were representations of the prophets and the righteous, and that they were intermediaries to draw closer to Allah. This type of shirk is something Allah rejected in the case of the Christians. As for the intercession that the Quran negates, as practiced by the polytheists, Christians, and those who resemble them from this nation, it is rejected by the people of knowledge and faith. This type of intercession involves asking the dead or absent saints and prophets to fulfill their needs, claiming that if they wished, they would grant them. They compare these figures to royal ministers who have the power to fulfill the needs of the people, and they equate them to the special associates of a king. Allah, however, has purified Himself from such comparisons. This, which the Shaykh, may Allah have mercy on him, mentioned, is a consensus among Muslims that one who practices such intercession is a disbeliever and should be killed.”[827]

al-ʿAllāmah ʿAbdullāh Abā Butayn said: “The answer to all of this is that Allah, the Exalted, sent His messengers as bearers of good tidings and warners so that people would have no argument against Allah after the messengers. The greatest message they were sent with and called people to was the worship of Allah alone without any partners, and the prohibition of shirk, which is

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[826] Sharḥ Tafsīr Kalimat at-Tawḥīd by Shaykh Ṣāliḥ al-Fawzān p.27-28
[827] Ad-Durar as-Saniyyah 10/379-380

the worship of others besides Allah. If one who commits major shirk is excused due to ignorance, then who else would be excused?

The necessary implication of this claim is that there is no argument from Allah against anyone except for those who are obstinate. However, the one who makes this claim cannot consistently maintain it, as it leads to contradiction. For example, one cannot remain neutral about the disbelief of someone who doubts the message of Muhammad ﷺ or doubts the Resurrection, or doubts other fundamental aspects of the religion. Such doubts are signs of ignorance, and the scholars have stated in their books of jurisprudence the ruling of an apostate: it is the one who renounces Islam after having embraced it, through words, actions, doubts, or beliefs, and the cause of doubt is ignorance. The implication of this reasoning is that we would not declare the Jews, Christians, or those who prostrate to the sun, moon, and idols as disbelievers due to their ignorance, nor would we consider those whom ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allah be pleased with him) burned with fire as disbelievers, because we are certain that they were ignorant. The Muslim consensus is that anyone who does not declare the Jews and Christians as disbelievers, or who doubts their disbelief, is themselves a disbeliever. We are certain that most of them are ignorant."[828]

Ibn Taymiyyah said: "And with this, if one sacrifices for other than Allah, seeking closeness to Him, it would be prohibited, even if he says 'Bismillah,' as some of the hypocrites of this Ummah do—who seek closeness to the saints and stars through sacrifice, incense, and similar acts. Although these people are apostates, their sacrifice is not permissible under any circumstance."[829]

bn Taymiyyah said: Some of them consider facing it in prayer to be more virtuous than facing the Ka'bah, saying: This is the qiblah of the special ones, and the Ka'bah is the qiblah of the general public." It is well-known that this is disbelief in the Messenger and in what he brought, and it is polytheism with the Lord of the worlds. This is not done by one who knows that the Messenger came with something contrary to it, and that the Messenger brought the truth that cannot be contradicted.

Rather, this is done by one who is ignorant of the Sunnah of the Messenger, or by one who takes a path to Allah other than following the Messenger, such as someone who believes that the Messenger was sent to the general public, and that he or his Shaykh is from the special few who do not need to follow the Messenger, or that they have a path better than the path of the

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[828] Ad-Durar as-Saniyyah 12/69
[829] Iqtidhāʾ aṣ-Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm 2/65

Messenger, and so on. All of these are disbelievers, even if they magnify the grave of the Messenger as they magnify the graves of their Shaykhs."[830]

Shaykh Muḥammad Ibn ʿAbdul-Wahhāb said: Whoever disbelieves in Allah after his belief, except for one who is compelled, while his heart is at rest with faith. But whoever opens their heart to disbelief – upon them is the wrath of Allah, and they will have a great punishment. This is because they preferred the worldly life over the Hereafter." (Sūrah An-Nahl, 16:106-107) Allah does not excuse any of these people except for the one who is compelled, with his heart being at rest with faith. As for anyone else, they have disbelieved after their faith, whether they did it out of fear, to reconcile with others, out of attachment to their homeland, family, tribe, wealth, or even as a joke, or for other reasons, except for the one who was coerced."[831]

Fatwa No. 9257, Date: 22/12/1405 AH

Shaykh Bin Bāz was Asked: "Does every person who commits an act of disbelief or polytheism, knowing that they are ignorant of the act, get excused for their ignorance, or are they not excused? What is the evidence for either excusing or not excusing them?"

Answer: A person is not excused for worshiping anyone other than Allah, offering sacrifices to anyone other than Allah, making vows to anyone other than Allah, or similar acts of worship that are exclusive to Allah. They will not be excused unless they are in a non-Islamic country and have not received the message. They would be excused because of the lack of the message reaching them, not simply due to ignorance. This is supported by the narration from Muslim through Abu Huraira, where the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: "By Him in Whose Hand is my soul, no Jew or Christian hears of me and does not believe in that with which I have been sent, except that he will be from the people of the Fire."

The Prophet ﷺ did not excuse those who had heard of him, and anyone who lives in a Muslim country and has heard of the Prophet ﷺ is not excused for ignorance of the fundamentals of faith. As for those who asked the Prophet ﷺ to make for them a "Dhāt Anwāt" — a practice that was common among the polytheists — these were people who had recently embraced Islam, and they only made the request but did not act upon it. The Prophet ﷺ responded to them in a way that showed that if they had acted upon their request, they would have committed an act of kufr."[832]

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[830] Ar-Radd ʿalā al-Ikhnāʾī by Ibn Taymiyyah p.129
[831] Kashf ash-Shubuhāt by Muḥammad Ibn ʿAbdul-Wahhāb p.92-93
[832] https://shamela.ws/book/8322/9852

Shaykh Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm said: “The issue of declaring a specific individual a disbeliever (takfīr al-muʿayyan): Some people claim that an individual should never be declared a disbeliever. They misunderstand certain statements of Ibn Taymiyyah and mistakenly believe that only those whom the Qur’an explicitly declares as disbelievers—such as Pharaoh—can be ruled as such. However, the Qur’anic texts do not specify every single person. They study the rulings on apostasy but never apply them to anyone! This is utter misguidance and extreme ignorance. Rather, these rulings must be applied—but with conditions. As for those who hesitated to declare an individual a disbeliever in matters where the evidence may be unclear, they do not rule takfīr until the prophetic proof has been fully established against the person, in both its authenticity and meaning. Once the proof has been clearly explained, the person is ruled a disbeliever—whether he understands and rejects it, or claims not to understand. Not all disbelief stems from mere obstinacy.

However, regarding matters that are known by necessity to be part of what the Messenger ﷺ brought, if someone opposes them, then he is ruled a disbeliever immediately, without the need for further clarification—whether in fundamental or subsidiary matters—unless he is new to Islam. The third category involves ambiguous matters. In such cases, a person is not ruled a disbeliever, even after evidence has been presented to him—whether the issue pertains to fundamentals or secondary issues. An example of this is the man who instructed his family to burn his body after his death.”[833]

Shaykh ʿAbd al-Laṭīf said:

His statement: “By testifying that there is no deity but Allāh.” This applies to a person whose disbelief was due to their refusal to say it. If, in their state of kufr, they did not acknowledge this statement, then upon saying it, they become Muslim, and their Islam is recognized. However, as for a person who says it while being an apostate , or a Jew who says it, they both remain in their original state. An example of this is those who say “Lā ilāha illa Allāh” yet engage in actions that nullify it—such as those who worship al-Badawī or al-Jīlānī, or those who venerate the graves of the Prophet’s family and similar sites among the Rāfiḍah. The one who asks them to fulfill needs or seeks their help in times of distress has nullified “Lā ilāha illa Allāh.” His tongue says it, but his actions and words affirm that he acknowledges another deity alongside Allāh.

It is not required that he explicitly call it a deity using that exact wording and meaning together. If he perceives it as merely an intermediary, the mushrikūn also called their objects of worship, intermediary . In their terminology, the one to whom such requests are directed is the god, whether the request is directed at the entity itself or through its mediation.

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[833] Muʿjam al-Tawḥīd 3/74

The Prophet came with the statement of tawḥīd that invalidates all of this. This clarifies the reality of those who claim to belong to Islam. It is common among the youth today that some never pray at all, yet they believe themselves to be Muslim."

Q: What if they are ignorant? A: "There is no ignorance in tawḥīd. This is not something that can be unknown. Rather, this is someone who has turned away from religion. Can a person be ignorant of the sun? Their scholars are ignorant, and none are more ignorant than the mushrik. In the Qur'ān, jahl is only attributed to those who worship other than Allāh. They are ignorant, yet the ḥujjah (proof) against them is complete. Thus, two things coexist: knowledge to the extent that the ḥujjah has been established against them, and ignorance to the extent that they have turned away from it." A debate once took place between him and the Shaykh al-Azhar, who eventually said: "These people have taken on the appearance of kuffār." So he replied: "Then should we not take on the appearance of those who declare them mukaffirīn?"[834]

Shaykh Muhammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb was asked about someone who utters a statement of kufr without knowing its meaning—does this mean he is not declared a disbeliever because of it? Does it mean he uttered it without understanding its explanation, or that he uttered it without knowing that it renders him a disbeliever?

He replied: "If he utters a statement of kufr without knowing its meaning, then it is clear and obvious that he has spoken words whose meaning he does not understand. However, if the issue is that he does not know that it renders him a disbeliever, then the verse suffices as evidence: (Do not make excuses; you have disbelieved after your belief.) (Al-Tawbah: 66).

They were making excuses to the Prophet ﷺ, thinking that it did not render them disbelievers. It is astonishing that some interpret the matter in this way—meaning that kufr does not occur except with knowledge—while hearing the words of Allāh: (And they think that they are doing good deeds.) (Al-Kahf: 104) (Indeed, they took the devils as allies instead of Allāh while thinking that they were guided.) (Al-Aʿrāf: 30) (And indeed, they hinder them from the path while thinking that they are guided.) (Al-Zukhruf: 37) Does one assume that these people were not disbelievers?! But do not be surprised at the blatant ignorance regarding these matters due to how unfamiliar they have become."[835]

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[834] Fatāwā wa Rasā'il by Shaykh ʿAbd al-Laṭīf 12/197-198

[835] Āthār Ḥujaj al-Tawḥīd fī Mu'ākhadhat al-ʿAbīd p.211

al-ʿAllāmah ʿAbdullāh Abā Butayn said: "Scholars mention that if someone denies the obligation of any of the five pillars of worship, claims that one of them is merely recommended and not obligatory, denies the permissibility of something like bread, or denies the prohibition of something like alcohol, or even doubts these rulings—while being someone who cannot be ignorant of them—then he is deemed a disbeliever. However, if he is someone who might be ignorant of these rulings, he is informed; if he persists after clarification, he is declared a disbeliever and executed. They did not say: "Only if the truth becomes clear to him and he stubbornly rejects it, then he disbelieves."

Moreover, we cannot claim that someone is stubbornly rejecting the truth unless he explicitly states: "I know this is true, yet I refuse to accept or acknowledge it." Such a case is extremely rare. Furthermore, scholars from all schools of thought have listed countless beliefs, statements, and actions that lead to disbelief, without restricting this ruling to stubborn rejection. Thus, whoever claims that someone committing an act of disbelief is excused due to misinterpretation, ijtihād, error, taqlīd, or ignorance is, without a doubt, in opposition to the Qur'an, Sunnah, and scholarly consensus."[836]

Shaykh Sulaymān ibn Suhmān said: As for the statement: "And I used to affirm that Allah has forgiven this ummah for its mistakes, including mistakes in both doctrinal and practical matters."

I say: The actual words of the Shaykh (Ibn Taymiyyah) have been altered in a way that obscures his intent and meaning. At the beginning of his statement, he said: "I am always— and those who sit with me know this— one of the strongest opponents of labelling a specific individual as a disbeliever, a sinner, or an evildoer unless it is known that the prophetic proof has been established against him. Whoever opposes it is sometimes a disbeliever, sometimes a sinner, and sometimes an evildoer. And I affirm that Allah has forgiven this ummah..." Thus, the Shaykh's statement about not declaring a specific individual a disbeliever before the proof is established refers to specific issues where the evidence may be unclear to some people, such as matters of Qadar, Irjā', and similar theological positions held by sects of Ahl al-Ahwā'.

Some of their statements may contain aspects of disbelief, such as rejecting certain clear proofs from the Qur'an and Sunnah. Such statements may be classified as kufr, but the one making them is not necessarily ruled a disbeliever due to the possibility of an extenuating factor, such as ignorance or lack of awareness of the text itself or its interpretation. This is because taklīf only applies after the message has reached a person. That is why Ibn Taymiyyah mentioned this in

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[836] Ad-Durar as-Saniyyah 12/72-73

the context of the innovations of Ahl al-Ahwā'. He explicitly clarified this by stating—when discussing the disbelief of certain prominent theological figures after establishing this principle:

"This applies when the matter is obscure (khafiyyah), so one might argue against declaring such a person a disbeliever. However, when it comes to clear and obvious matters, or those known necessarily from the religion, then there is no hesitation in declaring the one who denies them a disbeliever." This has already been explained previously. The dispute between us and these extremists is not about theoretical, subtle, or interpretive issues where the evidence might be unclear. Rather, the dispute concerns the act of directing exclusive rights of Allah to saints and righteous people—such as supplication, love, fear, hope, seeking aid, and other forms of worship. This is something known necessarily from the religion of Islam—that only Allah deserves such acts of devotion. Whoever directs any of these acts to anyone other than Allah is a disbeliever and a polytheist."[837]

Shaykh Sulaymān ibn Suhmān said: "Know that not every error, ijtihād, or ignorance is excused. Allah has informed us in the Qur'an of the ignorance of many disbelievers while still explicitly declaring their disbelief. He also described the Christians as ignorant, even though no Muslim doubts their disbelief. We are certain that most Jews and Christians today are ignorant followers, yet we still affirm their disbelief and the disbelief of anyone who doubts their disbelief.

The Qur'an makes it clear that doubting the fundamentals of religion is itself disbelief. Doubt is wavering between two positions—such as someone who neither affirms nor denies the truthfulness of the Messenger, or neither affirms nor denies the occurrence of resurrection, or someone who neither believes in the obligation of prayer nor in its lack of obligation, or who neither affirms nor denies the prohibition of fornication. This is disbelief by the consensus of the scholars, and there is no excuse for one who is in such a state simply because he does not understand Allah's evidences and proofs. There is no excuse for him after the proof has reached him, even if he fails to comprehend it. What led the followers of ʿIttiḥādiyyah and Ḥulūliyyah into their blatant disbelief, grievous shirk, and complete denial of the true existence of the Lord of the worlds except their errors in this matter, in which they exercised their reasoning and went astray, misleading others from the straight path?

What led Al-Ḥallāj to his fate, with scholars unanimously agreeing on his execution, except the consequences of his so-called ijtihād? What caused the Qarmaṭians to embrace their vile heresies and abandon the bonds of Islam except their exercise of reasoning in what they falsely believed?

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[837] al-Asinnah al-Ḥaddād fī Kashf Shubuhāt ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād p. 159-160

What led the Rāfiḍah to their disbelief, their polytheism, their worship of the Twelve Imāms and others, and their cursing of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and his noble wives, except their so-called ijtihād? These people are the predecessors of this man and his likes, in claiming that 'every error is excused.' The logical conclusion of this claim would be that no one should be deemed sinful or declared a disbeliever for errors in all matters of fundamental belief—such as faith in Allah's existence, His Lordship, His exclusive right to be worshiped, His Decree and Predestination, belief in His perfect attributes, His knowledge of all events before they occur, and other essential tenets.

If one were to deny responsibility and accountability for errors in these matters, it would entail exonerating the deniers of Allah's essence, those who negate His Lordship, those who deny His names and attributes, those who reject His exclusive right to be worshiped, and those who claim that Allah does not know future events before they happen, such as the extreme Qadarites. Likewise, it would exonerate those who attribute worldly occurrences to celestial bodies, those who claim the existence of two eternal principles—light and darkness. If this heretic upholds all of this, then he is more disbelieving and misguided than the Jews and Christians. But if he claims that there is a distinction between these matters and the current issue of dispute—namely, invoking the dead and the absent for things that only Allah can do—then let him prove this distinction with clear evidence.

If he fails to do so, his argument collapses, and people of knowledge will recognize him as a deceiver and a sophist, not a scholar of fiqh and religion. He will be exposed as someone unfamiliar with Islam and its adherents, unable to distinguish between monotheists and polytheists. Rather, he remains in the darkness of natural ignorance, doubt, and manifest confusion. Only those who have deeply studied the works of Shaykh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah and are well-versed in his principles can truly understand his words. He explicitly states in numerous places that errors can be excused for those to whom Islamic teachings have not reached and against whom the evidence has not been established, in specific issues—provided they fear Allah as much as they can and sincerely exert their effort in seeking the truth.

But where is the 'fear of Allah' and 'exertion of effort' among those who worship graves and invoke the dead and the absent? How can they claim ignorance while the Qur'an is recited in mosques, schools, and homes, and the authentic and verified texts of the Sunnah are compiled, recorded, and widely available?"[838]

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[838] al-Asinnah al-Ḥaddād fī Kashf Shubuhāt ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād p. 163-164

al-ʿAllāmah ʿAbdullāh Abā Butayn said: “As for the objector who asks: “Didn’t Ibn Taymiyyah excuse the one who misinterprets or blindly follows others, and say that Allāh forgives the ignorant in ways He does not forgive others?” The response to this is: Such a statement is only cited by someone who agrees with Ibn Taymiyyah that seeking help from the Prophet (ﷺ) and other deceased individuals is prohibited and is shirk. They may then argue that the ignorant might be excused.

However, if someone denies Ibn Taymiyyah’s stance on this matter, criticizes those who follow him, or even considers them disbelievers, then they have no basis for excusing the individuals in question—because they do not see them as mistaken at all, but rather as rewarded for following what they believe is Allāh’s command: “Seek means of approach to Him” (Al-Mā’idah 5:35), according to this distorter of Allāh’s words. Thus, there is no reason to seek an excuse for them.

Everything the Shaykh stated in this matter—meaning Tawḥīd—was not merely his personal opinion, but rather a clarification of what is clearly established in the Qur’ān, Sunnah, and scholarly consensus. May Allāh have mercy on him and be pleased with him.

The Shaykh also said: A person may do something they believe to be righteous without knowing that it is actually forbidden. In such a case, they will be rewarded for their good intention and excused due to their ignorance. This is a broad topic. He also said: ‘The ignorant are forgiven in ways that others are not.’ However, he meant this generally, not in every specific case.

That is why he also said in Sharḥ al-ʿUmda: “Any rejection of Allāh’s message or command is disbelief, whether minor or major. However, if the matter is obscure and the correct understanding is difficult to reach, then one may be excused—especially in minor issues related to jurisprudence. But if the issue is well known and fundamental to the religion, there is no excuse.”

And he was also told that shirk is never forgiven, even if it is minor. His student, the author of al-Furūʿ, narrated that he said: “That is because of the generality of Allāh’s statement: ‘Indeed, Allāh does not forgive associating partners with Him’ (An-Nisā’ 4:48).”

In al-Risālah as-Saniyyah, Ibn Taymiyyah wrote: “Whoever exaggerates in their reverence for a prophet or righteous person and attributes to them some aspect of divinity—i.e, by calling upon them instead of Allāh, saying: ‘O my master, so-and-so, help me,’ or ‘save me,’ or ‘I put my trust in you,’ or ‘I am under your protection’—then this is all shirk and misguidance. The

individual must be given a chance to repent; if they do, they are forgiven, but if they refuse, they must be executed."

Similarly, in the case of those who believe in intermediaries, he said: "If someone commits this, they must be called to repent; if they refuse, they are to be executed."

The general meaning of Allāh's statement: "Indeed, Allāh does not forgive associating partners with Him" (An-Nisāʾ 4:48), applies to every polytheist. The jurists of all Islamic schools of thought state in their sections on apostasy that whoever associates partners with Allāh has committed disbelief, and they cite this verse and others like it as evidence. None of them excluded the ignorant from this ruling. Allāh also says: "Say: Shall We tell you who are the greatest losers in their deeds? They are those whose efforts in the worldly life were misguided, while they thought they were doing good" (Al-Kahf 18:103-104).

And: "A group was guided, while a group deserved to be in error, for they took devils as allies instead of Allāh, and they thought they were guided" (Al-Aʿrāf 7:30).

Ibn Jarīr (al-Ṭabarī) commented: "This is one of the clearest proofs against those who claim that Allāh does not punish anyone for a sin they committed or a misguidance they believed in—unless they knew it was wrong. If that were true, there would be no difference between the misguided ones who think they are upon guidance and those who are truly guided. But Allāh has clearly distinguished between them in this verse."[839]

Imām al-Marwazī reported: Ishaq ibn Rāhūyah said: "Among those whom there is consensus on declaring as disbelievers — and they are judged the same as the jāḥid (denier) — is a mu'min who believes in Allāh the Exalted and in what has come from Him, but then kills a prophet or assists in killing him, even if he acknowledges and says, 'Killing the prophets is ḥarām', he is still a kāfir. Likewise, whoever insults a prophet or rejects his statement without any excuse of taqiyyah or fear — he is a kāfir."[840]

Ibn 'Abd al-Barr said: "Ishaq said: The scholars have unanimously agreed that whoever insults Allah, may He be exalted, or insults His Messenger, or denies something revealed by Allah, or kills a prophet from the prophets of Allah, while still acknowledging what Allah has revealed, is a disbeliever. Similarly, the one who leaves the prayer until its time expires deliberately is also a disbeliever."[841]

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[839] Taʾsīs al-Taqdīs fī Kashf Talbīs Dāwūd bin Jirjīs wa Yalīhi Daḥḍ Shubuhāt ʿalā al-Tawḥīd by al-ʿAllāmah ʿAbdullāh Abā Buṭayn p.158-160]
[840] Taʾẓīm Qadr aṣ-Ṣalāh - Imām al-Marwazī 2/930]
[841] Al-Tamhid, 4/226

Shaykh Sulaymān ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb: “Even if what is meant is: “You have manifested kufr after having shown īmān,” they did not display that kufr except through their khawd (mockery). And even while they were engaged in khawd, they still appeared the same outwardly. Rather, when they became munāfiqūn and feared that a sūrah might be revealed about them — “The hypocrites fear that a chapter will be revealed about them, informing them of what is in their hearts” [al-Tawbah: 64] — it became clear what was in their hearts of nifāq, and they spoke in mockery. Meaning: they became kuffār after their īmān.

And the wording does not indicate that they remained munāfiqūn, until Allāh said: “And if you ask them, they will surely say, ‘We were only talking idly and joking.’” So they admitted it, and that is why it was said: “Make no excuse; you have disbelieved after your belief. If We pardon a group of you, We will punish another group for they were criminals.”

This indicates that they did not consider themselves to have committed kufr — rather, they thought it was not kufr. It thus becomes clear that mocking the verses of Allāh and His Messenger is kufr by which a person becomes a kāfir after having been a believer. This shows that they did have some level of weak īmān, and they committed this muḥarram (forbidden act), which they knew to be forbidden — but they did not consider it to be kufr. Yet it was kufr, and through it, they became kuffār, even though they did not believe it was permissible.

This verse is evidence that if a person commits kufr without knowing that it is kufr, he is still not excused — rather, he becomes a kāfir. And someone who is doubtful is a kāfir even more so.”[842]

We will end it with this quote to reveal the true reality of these extreme Murji’ah who excuse the grave worshipper and their like who do Shirk, they are nothing but the brothers of the grave worshippers.

Shaykh Abd al-Latif ibn Abd al-Rahman ibn Hasan Āl al-Shaykh said: "As for al-ʿIrāqī and his misguided companions, they argued that the Shaykh (Ibn Taymiyyah) does not declare the ignorant to be disbelievers and that he says they are excused. They made this claim in a vague manner without providing details, and used this misconception as a shield to reject the Quranic verses and prophetic hadiths. They raised their voices against the monotheists, as was the case with their predecessors from the worshippers of graves and polytheists. And to Allah is the final return, and He is the Judge between His servants regarding what they differed in."[843]

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[842] Taysīr al-ʿAzīz al-Ḥamīd by Shaykh Sulaymān ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb p.415
[843] Minhāj al-Tāsīs wa al-Taqdīs p.227]

Look at how the Shaykh points out the supporters of the grave worshippers used ambiguous quotes from the likes of Ibn Taymiyyah to defend and excuse the shirk of the mushrikeen.

We can reference many more statements from the Scholars but to save time for the reader and not burden them. We will conclude here that their removal of actions (and speech at times) from īmān has led them to affirm one can commit acts of disbelief with either and still remain a muslim as long as they say the Shahada. One can have Shirk and Tawhid coexist at the same time within themselves, and this is the most evil of statements.

Shaykh ʿAbdur-Raḥmān ibn Ḥasan an-Najdī said: "Indeed, whoever commits ash-Shirk, then he has left at-Tawḥīd, for they are two opposites that do not combine; so in that moment in which ash-Shirk is established, at-Tawḥīd vanishes."[844]

We will conclude the book here

"All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, upon the completion. We ask Allah to complete that with acceptance and reward. May Allah send His Peace and Blessings upon our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, and upon his Household and his Companions, all together."

[844] Ad-Durar as-Sanīyyah, Vol. 2, Pg. 204